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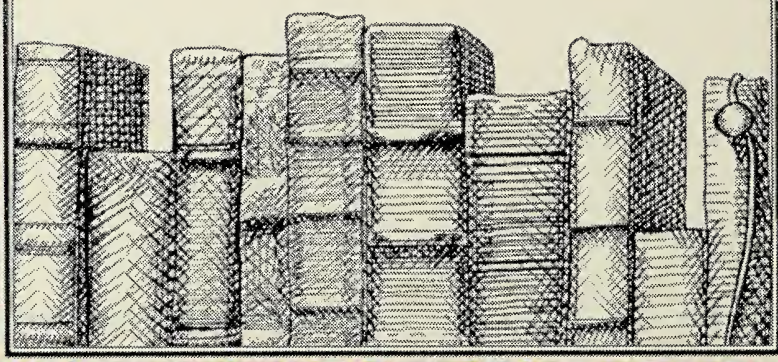

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NARRATIVE

OF THE

CAPTIVITY

AND

SUFFERINGS

OF

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BENJAMIN GILBERT

67

AND HIS

FAMILY;

WHO WERE SURPRISED BY THE INDIANS, AND TAKEN FROM THEIR FARMS, ON THE FRONTIERS OF PENNSYLVANIA.

IN THE SPRING, 1780.

Walton, William J

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PREFACE.

AS the captivity of Benjamin Gilbert's Family has been a ſubject of much inquiry, and many of their friends were anxious to have a particular account of their ſufferings; the following narrative is preſented to them and the publick, reciting the tranſactions as circumſtantially as could be furniſhed from memory, after comparing accounts with each other on their return from Canada.

That their lives were preſerved through the many threatening ſcenes they paſſed, whilſt in the hands of the Indians, is to be aſcribed, with gratitude and thankfulneſs, to the great Ruler of the univerſe, who can ſay unto the ſea, "Thus far ſhalt thou go, and no fur-"ther." And though Benjamin Gilbert the elder, was permitted to ſink under the weight of his fatigue and afflictions, he lived to be reſtored to liberty, and breathed his laſt in the arms of his affectionate wife.

To be caſt into the power of ſavages, who, from infancy, are taught hardneſs of heart,

which deprives them of the common feelings of humanity, is enough to intimidate the firmeſt mind: but when we hear of helpleſs women and children torn from their homes, and dragged into the wilderneſs, we ſhudder at the thought, and are bound to acknowledge our infinite obligations to the Almighty, that we are ſo much more enlightened than thoſe unhappy wretches of the deſert; to moſt of whom the glad tidings of the goſpel remains yet to be proclaimed: "Glory "to God in the higheſt; on earth peace, and "good will to men."

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BENJAMIN GILBERT

AND HIS

FAMILY.

BENJAMIN GILBERT, ſon of Joſeph Gilbert, was born at Byberry, about 15 miles from the city of Philadelphia, in the year 1711, and received his education among the people called Quakers.

He reſided at or near the place of his nativity for ſeveral years; during which time of reſidence he married, and after the deceaſe of his firſt wife, he accompliſhed a ſecond marriage with Elizabeth Peart, widow of Bryan Peart, and continued in this neighbourhood until the year 1775, when he removed with his family to a farm, ſituate on Mahoning Creek, in Penn Townſhip, North-

ampton county, being the frontiers of Pennſylvania, not far from where Fort Allen was erected. The improvements he carried on here were according to the uſual manner of new ſettlements, convenience being principally attended to, his houſe and barn being of logs; to this he had added a ſaw-mill, and a commodious ſtone griſt-mill, which, as it commanded the country for a conſiderable diſtance, conduced in ſome meaſure to render his ſituation comfortable.

This ſhort account may not be improper, in order to intereſt our feelings in the relation of the many ſcenes of affliction the family were reduced to, when ſnatched from the pleaſing enjoyment of the neceſſaries and conveniencies of life. The moſt flattering of our proſpects are often marked with diſappointment, expreſſively inſtructing us, that we are all ſtrangers and ſojourners here, as were our forefathers.

This family was alarmed on the 25th day of the 4th Month, 1780, about ſun-riſe, by a party of eleven Indians, whoſe appearance ſtruck them with terror; to attempt an eſcape was death, and a portion of diſtreſs, not eaſy to be ſupported, the certain attendant on the moſt patient and ſubmiſſive conduct. The Indians, who made this incurſion, were of different tribes or nations, who had abandoned their country on the approach of General Sullivan's army, and fled within command

command of the Britiſh forts in Canada, promiſcuouſly ſettling within their neighbourhood; and, according to Indian cuſtom of carrying on war, frequently invading the frontier ſettlements, taking captive the weak and defenceleſs.

The names of theſe Indians, with their reſpective tribes, are as follow:

1. Rowland Monteur, 1ſt captain.
2. John Monteur, ſecond in command, who was alſo ſtiled captain: theſe two were Mohawks, deſcended of a French woman.
3. Samuel Harris, a Cayuga Indian.
4. John Huſton, and his ſon } Cayugas
5. John Huſton, jun. }
6. John Fox, of the Delaware nation. The other 5 were Senecas.

At this place they made captives of the following perſons:

1.	Benjamin Gilbert, aged about	69 years
2.	Elizabeth, his wife,	55
3.	Joſeph Gilbert, his ſon	41
4.	Jeſſe Gilbert, another ſon,	19
5.	Sarah Gilbert, wife to Jeſſe,	19
6.	Rebecca Gilbert, a daughter,	16
7.	Abner Gilbert, a ſon,	14
8.	Elizabeth Gilbert, a daughter,	12
9.	Thomas Peart, ſon to Benjamin Gilbert's wife,	23
10.	Benjamin Gilbert, a ſon of John Gilbert, of Philadelphia,	11

11. Andrew Harrigar, of German deſcent, hired by Benjamin Gilbert, } 26 years

12. Abigal Dodſon, (daughter of Samuel Dodſon, who lived on a farm near one mile diſtance from the mill) who came that morning with griſt, } 14

They then proceeded to Benjamin Peart's dwelling, about half a mile farther, and brought himſelf and family, viz.

13. Benjamin Peart, ſon to Benjamin Gilbert's wife, } 27

14. Elizabeth Peart, his wife, 20

15. Their child about nine months old.

The priſoners were bound with cords, which the Indians brought with them, and in this melancholy condition left under a guard for the ſpace of half an hour; during which time, the reſt of the captors employed themſelves in plundering the houſe, and packing up ſuch goods as they choſe to carry off, until they had got together a ſufficient loading for three horſes, which they took, beſides compelling the diſtreſſed priſoners to carry part of their plunder. When they had finiſhed plundering, they began their retreat, two of their number being detached to fire the buildings, which they did without any exception of thoſe belonging to the unhappy ſufferers; thereby aggravating their diſtreſſes, as they could obſerve the flames,

flames, and the falling in of the roofs, from an adjoining eminence called Summer Hill. They caſt a mournful look towards their dwellings, but were not permitted to ſtop, until they had reached the further ſide of the hill, where the party ſat down to make a ſhort repaſt; but grief prevented the priſoners from ſharing with them.

The Indians ſpeedily put forwards from this place; as they apprehended they were not ſo far removed from the ſettlements, as to be ſecure from purſuit. Not much further was a large hill, called Mochunk, which they fixed upon for a place of rendezvous: here they halted near an hour, and prepared ſhoes or ſandals, which they call mockaſons, for ſome of the children: conſidering themſelves in ſome degree relieved from danger, their fears abated, ſo that they could enjoy their meal at leiſure, which they ate very heartily. At their removal from this hill, they told the priſoners that Colonel Butler was no great diſtance from them, in the woods, and that they were going to him.

Near the foot of the hill flows a ſtream of water, called Mochunk Creek, which was croſſed, and the ſecond mountain paſſed; the ſteep and difficult aſcent of which appeared very great to the much enfeebled and affrighted captives: they were permitted to reſt themſelves for ſome minutes, and then preſſed on-

wards to the broad mountain, at the foot of which runs Neſcaconnah Creek.

Doubly diſtreſſed by a recollection of paſt happineſs, and a dread of the miſeries they had now to undergo, they began the aſcent of this mountain with great anguiſh both of body and mind. Benjamin Gilbert's wife, diſpirited with the increaſing difficulties, did not expect ſhe was able to paſs this mountain on foot; but being threatened with death by the Indians if ſhe did not perform it, with many a heavy ſtep ſhe at length ſucceeded. The broad mountain is ſaid to be ſeven miles over in this place, and about ten miles diſtant from Benjamin Gilbert's ſettlement. Here they halted an hour, and then ſtruck into the Neſkapeck Path; the unevenneſs and ruggedneſs of which rendered it exceedingly toilſome, and obliged them to move forwards ſlowly. Quackac Creek runs acroſs the Neſkapeck Path, which leads over Piſmire Hill. At this laſt place they ſtopped to refreſh themſelves, and then purſued their march along the ſame path, through Moravian Pine Swamp, to Mahoniah Mountain, where they lodged, being the firſt night of their captivity.

It may furniſh information to ſome, to mention the method the Indians generally uſe to ſecure their priſoners; they cut down a ſapling as large as a man's thigh, and there-

in

in cut notches, in which they fix their legs, and over this they place a pole, croſſing the pole on each ſide with ſtakes drove in the ground, and in the crotches of the ſtakes they place other poles or riders, effectually confining the priſoners on their backs; beſides which, they put a ſtrap round their necks, which they faſten to a tree: in this manner the night paſſed. Their beds were hemlock branches ſtrewed on the ground, and blankets for a covering, which was an indulgence ſcarcely to have been expected from ſavages: it may reaſonably be expected, that in this melancholy ſituation, ſleep was a ſtranger to their eye-lids.

Benjamin Peart having fainted in the evening, occaſioned by the ſufferings he endured, was threatened to be tomahawked by Rowland Monteur.

26th. Early this morning they continued their route near the waters of Teropin Ponds. The Indians thought it moſt eligible to ſeparate the priſoners in companies of two by two, each company under the command of a particular Indian, ſpreading them to a conſiderable diſtance, in order to render a purſuit as impracticable as poſſible. The old people, overcome with fatigue, could not make ſo much expedition as their ſevere taſk-maſters thought proper, but failed in their journey, and were therefore threatened with death by

the Indian under whoſe direction they were placed: thus circumſtanced, they reſigned themſelves to their unhappy lot with as much fortitude as poſſible. Towards evening the parties again met and encamped, having killed a deer, they kindled a fire, each one roaſting pieces of the fleſh upon ſharpened ſwitches. The confinement of the captives was the ſame with the firſt night; but, as they were by this time more reſigned to the event, they were not altogether deprived of ſleep.

27th. After breakfaſt a council was held concerning the diviſion of the priſoners, which being ſettled, they delivered each other thoſe priſoners who fell within their ſeveral allotments, given them directions to attend to the particular Indians whoſe property they became. In this day's journey they paſſed near Fort Wyoming, on the eaſtern branch of Suſquehanna, about forty miles from their late habitation. The Indians, naturally timid, were alarmed as they approached this garriſon, and obſerved great caution, not ſuffering any noiſe, but ſtepped on the ſtones that lay in the path, leſt any footſteps ſhould lead to a diſcovery. Not far from thence is a conſiderable ſtream of water, emptying itſelf into Suſquehanna, which they croſſed with great difficulty, it being deep and rapid, and continued here this night. Benjamin Gilbert, being bound faſt with cords, underwent great ſufferings.

28th.

28th. This morning the priſoners were all painted according to the cuſtom among the Indians, ſome of them with red and black, ſome all red, and ſome with black only: thoſe whom they ſmut with black, without any other colour, are not conſidered of any value, and are by this mark generally devoted to death: although this cruel purpoſe may not be executed immediately, they are ſeldom preſerved to reach the Indian hamlets alive. In the evening they came to Suſquehanna, having had a painful and weariſome journey through a very ſtony and hilly path. Here the Indians ſought diligently for a private lodging-place, that they might be as ſecure as poſſible from any ſcouting-parties of the white people. It is unneceſſary to make further mention of their manner of lodging, as it ſtill remained the ſame.

29th. They went in ſearch of the horſes which had ſtrayed from them in the night, and after ſome time found them. They then kept the courſe of the river, walking along its ſide with difficulty. In the afternoon they came to a place where the Indians had directed four negroes to wait their return, having left them ſome corn for a ſubſiſtence: theſe negroes had eſcaped from confinement, and were on their way to Niagara, when firſt diſcovered by the Indians; being challenged by them, anſwered, "They were for the king," upon which they immediately received them into protection.

30th

30th. The negroes, who were added to the company the day before, began cruelly to domineer and tyranniſe over the priſoners, frequently whipping them for their ſport, and treating them with more ſeverity than even the Indians themſelves; having had their hearts hardened by the meanneſs of their condition, and long ſubjection to ſlavery. In this day's journey they paſſed the remains of the Indian town, Wyalooſing. The lands round theſe ruins have a remarkable appearance of fertility. In the evening they made a lodgment by the ſide of a large creek.

5th Month 1ſt. After croſſing a conſiderable hill, in the morning, they came to a place where two Indians lay dead. A party of Indians had taken ſome white people, whom they were carrying off priſoners, they roſe upon the Indians in the night, killed four of them, and then effected their eſcape. The women were ſent forwards, and the men priſoners commanded to draw near and view the two dead bodies, which remained (the other two being removed); they ſtaid to obſerve them a conſiderable time, and were then ordered to a place where a tree was blown down. Death appeared to be their doom; but after remaining in a ſtate of ſad ſuſpenſe for ſome time, they were ordered to dig a grave; to effect which, they cut a ſapling with their tomahawks, and ſharpened one end, with which

which wooden inſtrument one of them broke the ground, and the others caſt the earth out with their hands, the negroes being permitted to beat them ſeverely whilſt they were thus employed. After interring the bodies, they went forwards to the reſt, and overtook them as they were preparing for their lodging. They were not yet releaſed from their ſapling confinement.

2d. Having ſome of their proviſions with them, they made an early meal, and travelled the whole day. They croſſed the eaſt branch of Suſquehanna towards evening, in canoes, at the place where General Sullivan's army had paſſed it in their expedition. Their encampment was on the weſtern ſide of this branch of the river; but two Indians, who did not croſs it, ſent for Benjamin Gilbert, jun. and Jeſſe Gilbert's wife; and as no probable cauſe could be aſſigned why it was ſo, the deſign was conſidered as a very dark one, and was a grievous affliction to the others.

3d. The morning however diſpelled their fears, when they had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing them again, and underſtood they had not received any treatment harder than their uſual fare. The horſes ſwam the Suſquehanna, by the ſide of the canoe. This day the Indians in their march found a ſcalp, and took it along with them, as alſo ſome old corn, of which they made a ſupper. They frequently

frequently killed deer, and by that means ſupplied the company with meat, being almoſt the only proviſions they ate, as the flour they took with them was expended.

4th. The path they travelled this morning was but little trodden, which made it difficult for thoſe, who were not acquainted with the woods, to keep in it. They croſſed a creek, made up a large fire to warm themſelves by, and then ſeparated into two companies, the one taking the Weſtward Path, with whom were Thomas Peart, Joſeph Gilbert, Benjamin Gilbert, jun. and Jeſſe Gilbert's wife Sarah; the others went more to the north, over rich level land. When evening came, inquiry was made concerning the four captives who were taken in the Weſtward Path, and they were told, that "Theſe "were killed and ſcalped, and you may ex-"pect the ſame fate to night." * Andrew Harrigar was ſo terrified at the threat, that he reſolved upon leaving them, and as ſoon as it was dark, took a kettle with pretence of bringing ſome water, and made his eſcape under favour of the night: he was ſought after by the Indians as ſoon as they obſerved him to be miſſing.

* Andrew Harrigar endured many hardſhips in the woods, and at length returned to the ſettlements, and gave the firſt authentic intelligence of Benjamin Gilbert and his family to their friends.

5th.

5th. In the morning the Indians returned; their ſearch for Andrew Harrigar being happily for him unſucceſsful: the priſoners who remained, were therefore treated with great ſeverity on account of his eſcape, and were often accuſed of being privy to his deſign. Captain Rowland Monteur carried his reſentment ſo far, that he threw Jeſſe Gilbert down, and lifted his tomahawk to ſtrike him, which the mother prevented, by putting her head on his forehead, beſeeching him to ſpare her ſon: this ſo enraged him, that he turned round, kicked her over, and tied them both by their necks to a tree, where they remained until his fury was a little abated; he then looſed them, and not long after bid them pack up and go forwards. They paſſed through a large pine ſwamp, and about noon reached one of the Kittareen towns, which was deſolated. Not far from this town, on the ſummit of a mountain, there iſſues a large ſpring, forming a very conſiderable fall, and runs very rapidly in an irregular winding ſtream down the mountain's ſides. They left this place, and took up their lodging in a deſerted wigwam covered with bark, which had formerly been part of the Shipquagas.

6th, 7th, 8th. They continued theſe three days in the neighbourhood of theſe villages, which had been deſerted upon General Sullivan's approach. Here they lived well, having,

ing, in addition to their uſual bill of fare, plenty of turnips and potatoes, which had remained in the ground, unnoticed by the army. This place was the hunting ground of the Shipquagas; and whenever their induſtry prompted them to go out a hunting, they had no difficulty to procure as many deer as they deſired.

Roaſt and boiled meat, with vegetables, afforded them plentiful meals; they alſo caught a wild turkey, and ſome fiſh, called ſuckers. Their manner of catching fiſh, was, to ſharpen a ſtick, and watch along the rivers until a fiſh came near them, when they ſuddenly pierced him with the ſtick, and brought him out of the water.

Here were a number of colts, ſome of them were taken, and the priſoners ordered to manage them, which was not eaſily done.

9th. When they renewed their march, they placed the mother upon a horſe that ſeemed dangerous to ride, but ſhe was preſerved from any injury. In this day's journey they came to Meadow Ground, where they ſtaid the night, the men being confined as before related, and the negroes lay near them for a guard.

10th. A wet ſwamp, that was very troubleſome, lay in their road; after which they had to paſs a rugged mountain, where there was no path. The underbruſh made it hard labour for

for the women to travel; but no excuſe would avail with their ſevere maſters, and they were compelled to keep up with the Indians, however great the fatigue: when they had paſſed it, they tarried a while for the negroes who had lagged behind, having ſufficient employ to attend to the colts that carried the plunder. When all the company met together, they agreed to rendezvous in an adjoining ſwamp.

11th. A long reach of ſavannas and low ground rendered this day's route very fatiguing and painful, eſpecially to the women: Elizabeth Peart's huſband not being allowed to relieve her by carrying the child, her ſpirits and ſtrength were ſo exhauſted that ſhe was ready to faint; the Indian, under whoſe care ſhe was, obſerving her diſtreſs, gave her a violent blow. When we compare the temper and cuſtoms of theſe people, with thoſe of our own colour, how much cauſe have we to be thankful for the ſuperiority we derive from the bleſſings of civilization.

It might truly be ſaid, days of bitter ſorrow, and weariſome nights, were appointed the unhappy captives.

12th. Their proviſions began to grow ſcant, having paſſed the hunting grounds: the want of proper food to ſupport them, which might render them more capable of enduring their daily fatigue, was a heavy trial, and

was

was much increaſed by their confinement at night. Elizabeth Gilbert was reduced ſo low, that ſhe travelled in great pain all this day, riding on horſeback in the morning, but towards evening ſhe was ordered to alight, and walk up a hill they had to aſcend; the pain ſhe ſuffered, together with want of food, ſo overcame her, that ſhe was ſeized with a chill: the Indians adminiſtered ſome flour and water boiled, which afforded her ſome relief.

13th. Laſt night's medicine being repeated, they continued their march, and after a long walk, were ſo effectually worn down, that they halted. The pilot, John Huſton, the elder, took Abner Gilbert with him, (as they could make more expedition than the reſt) to procure a ſupply of proviſions to relieve their neceſſity.

14th. The mother had ſuffered ſo much, that two of her children were obliged to lead her. Before noon they came to Canadoſago, where they met with Benjamin Gilbert, jun. and Jeſſe Gilbert's wife Sarah, two of the four who had been ſeparted from them ten days paſt, and taken along the Weſtern Path: this meeting afforded them great ſatisfaction; the doubt and uncertainty of their lives being ſpared often diſtreſſing their affectionate relations.

John Huſton, jun. the Indian, under whoſe care Benjamin Gilbert was placed, deſigning

to

to diſpatch him, painted him black; this exceedingly terrified the family, but no intreaties of theirs being likely to prevail, they reſigned their cauſe to him whoſe power can controul all events. Wearied with their weakneſs and travelling, they made a ſtop to recover themſelves, when the pilot returning, aſſured them they ſhould ſoon receive ſome proviſions. The negroes were reduced ſo low with hunger, that their behaviour was different from what it had been, conducting with more moderation. At their quarters in the evening, two white men came to them, one of which was a volunteer amongſt the Britiſh, the other had been taken a priſoner ſome time before; theſe two men brought ſome hommony, and ſugar made from the ſweet maple, the ſap being boiled to a conſiſtency, and is but a little inferior to the ſugar imported from the iſlands: of this proviſion, and an hedge-hog which they found, they made a more comfortable ſupper than they had enjoyed for many days.

15th. In the morning the volunteer having received information of the rough treatment the priſoners met with from the negroes, relieved them, by taking the four blacks under his care. It was not without much difficulty they croſſed a large creek which was in their way, being obliged to ſwim the horſes over it. Benjamin Gilbert began to fail; the Indian,

Indian, whoſe property he was, highly irritated at his want of ſtrength, put a rope about his neck, leading him along with it; fatigue at laſt ſo overcame him, that he fell on the ground, when the Indian pulled the rope ſo hard, that he almoſt choaked him: his wife ſeeing this, reſolutely interceded for him, although the Indians bid her go forwards, as the others had gone on before them; this ſhe refuſed to comply with, unleſs her huſband might be permitted to accompany her; they replied, "That they "were determined to kill the old man," having before this ſet him apart as a victim: but at length her intreaties prevailed, and their hearts were turned from their cruel purpoſe. Had not an over-ruling providence preſerved him from their fury, he would inevitably have periſhed, as the Indians ſeldom ſhew mercy to thoſe whom they devote to death, which, as has been before obſerved, was the caſe with Benjamin Gilbert, whom they had ſmeared with black paint from this motive. When their anger was a little moderated, they ſet forwards to overtake the reſt of the company: their relations, who had been eye-witneſſes of the former part of this ſcene of cruelty, and expected they would both have been murdered, rejoiced greatly at their return, conſidering their ſafety as a providential deliverance.

16th.

16th. Neceſſity induced two of the Indians to ſet off on horſeback, into the Seneca country, in ſearch of proviſions. The priſoners, in the mean time, were ordered to dig up a root, ſomething reſembling potatoes, which the Indians call whoppanies. They tarried at this place until towards the evening of the ſucceeding day, and made a ſoup of wild onions and turnip-tops; this they eat without bread or ſalt; it could not therefore afford ſufficient ſuſtenance, either for young or old; their food being ſo very light, their ſtrength daily waſted.

17th. They left this place, and croſſed the Geneſee river, (which empties its waters into lake Ontario) on a raft of logs, bound together by hickory withes; this appeared to be a dangerous method of ferrying them over ſuch a river, to thoſe who had been unaccuſtomed to ſuch conveyances. They fixed their ſtation near the Geneſee banks, and procured more of the wild potatoe roots before-mentioned for their ſupper.

18th. One of the Indians left the company, taking with him the fineſt horſe they had, and in ſome hours after returned with a large piece of meat, ordering the captives to boil it; this command they cheerfully performed, anxiouſly watching the kettle, freſh meat being a rarity which they had not eat for a long time: the Indians, when it

was

was ſufficiently boiled, diſtributed to each one a piece, eating ſparingly themſelves. The priſoners made their repaſt without bread or ſalt, and eat with a good reliſh, what they ſuppoſed to be freſh beef, but underſtood it was horſe-fleſh.

A ſhrill halloo, which they heard, gave the priſoners ſome uneaſineſs; one of the Indians immediately rode to examine the cauſe, and found it was Capt. Rowland Monteur, and his brother John's wife, with ſome other Indians, who were ſeeking them with proviſion. The remainder of the company ſoon reached them, and they divided ſome bread, which they had brought, into ſmall pieces, according to the number of the company.

Here is a large extent of rich farming land, remarkable for its levelneſs and beautiful meadows. The country is ſo flat, that there are no falls in the rivers, and the waters run ſlow and deep; and whenever ſhowers deſcend, they continue a long time muddied.

The captain and his company had brought with them cakes of hommony, and Indian corn; of this they made a good meal. He appeared pleaſed to ſee the priſoners, having been abſent from them ſeveral days, and ordered them all round to ſhake hands with him. From him they received information reſpecting Joſeph Gilbert and Thomas Peart, who were ſeparated from the others on the 4th inſtant,

inſtant, that they had arrived at the Indian ſettlements, ſome time, in ſafety.

The company ſtaid the night at this place. One of the Indians refuſed to ſuffer any of them to come near his fire, or converſe with the priſoner, who in the diſtribution had fallen to him.

19th. Pounding hommony was this day's employment, the weather being warm made it a hard taſk; they boiled and prepared it for ſupper, the Indians ſetting down to eat firſt, and when they had concluded their meal, they wiped the ſpoon on the ſoal of their mockaſoons, and then gave it to the captives: hunger alone could prevail on any one to eat after ſuch filth and naſtineſs.

20th. Elizabeth Gilbert, the mother, being obliged to ride alone, miſſed the path, for which the Indians repeatedly ſtruck her. Their route ſtill continued through rich meadow. After wandering for a time out of the direct path, they came to an Indian town, and obtained the neceſſary information to purſue their journey: the Indians ran out of their huts to ſee the priſoners, and to partake of the plunder, but no part of it ſuited them. Being directed to travel the path back again, for a ſhort diſtance, they did ſo, and then ſtruck into another, and went on until night, by which time they were very hungry, not having eat ſince morning; the kettle was

again ſet on the fire for hommony, this being their only food.

21ſt. The report of a morning-gun from Niagara, which they heard, contributed to raiſe their hopes, they rejoiced at being ſo near. An Indian was diſpatched on horſe-back, to procure proviſions from the fort.

Elizabeth Gilbert could not walk as faſt as the reſt, ſhe was therefore ſent forwards on foot, but was ſoon overtaken, and left behind, the reſt being obliged by the Indians to go on without regarding her. She would have been greatly perplexed, when ſhe came to a diviſion-path, had not her huſband lain a branch acroſs the path which would have led her wrong: an affecting inſtance of both ingenuity and tenderneſs. She met ſeveral Indians, who paſſed by without ſpeaking to her.

An Indian belonging to the company, who was on the horſe Elizabeth Gilbert had rode, overtook her, and, as he went on ſlowly, converſing with her, endeavoured to alarm her, by ſaying, that ſhe would be left behind, and periſh in the woods; yet, notwithſtanding this, his heart was ſo ſoftened before he had gone any great diſtance from her, that he alighted from the horſe and left him, that ſhe might be able to reach the reſt of the company. The more ſeriouſly ſhe conſidered this, the more it appeared to her to be a convincing

convincing inſtance of the over-ruling protection of him, who can "turn the heart of man, as the huſbandman turneth the water-courſe in his field."

22d. As the Indians approached nearer their habitations, they frequently repeated their halloos, and after ſome time, they received an anſwer in the ſame manner, which alarmed the company much; but they ſoon diſcovered it to proceed from a party of Whites and Indians, who were on ſome expedition, though their pretence was, that they were for New-York. Not long after parting with theſe, the captain's wife came to them; ſhe was daughter to Siangorochti, king of the Senecas, but her mother being a Cayuga, ſhe was ranked among that nation, the children generally reckoning their deſcent from the mother's ſide. This princeſs was attended by the captain's brother, John, one other Indian, and a white priſoner, who had been taken at Wyoming by Rowland Monteur; ſhe was dreſſed altogether in the Indian manner, ſhining with gold lace and ſilver baubles: they brought with them from the fort a ſupply of proviſions. The captain being at a diſtance behind, when his wife came, the company waited for him. After the cuſtomary ſalutations, he addreſſed himſelf to his wife, telling her that Rebecca was her daughter, and that ſhe muſt not be induced, by any

 conſideration,

conſideration, to part with her; whereupon ſhe took a ſilver ring off her finger, and put it upon Rebecca, by which ſhe was adopted as her daughter.

They feaſted upon the proviſions that were brought, for they had been for ſeveral days before pinched with hunger, what ſuſtenance they could procure not being ſufficient to ſupport nature.

23d. Their ſpirits were in ſome degree revived, by the enjoyment of plenty, added to the pleaſing hope of ſome favourable event procuring their releaſement, as they were not far diſtant from Niagara.

The Indians proceeded on their journey, and continued whooping in the moſt frightful manner. In this day's route they met another company of Indians, who compelled Benjamin Gilbert, the elder, to ſit on the ground, and put ſeveral queſtions to him, to which he gave them the beſt anſwers he could; they then took his hat from him, and went off.

Going through a ſmall town, near Niagara, an Indian woman came out of one of the huts, and ſtruck each of the captives a blow. Not long after their departure from this place, Jeſſe, Rebecca, and their mother, were detained until the others had got out of their ſight, when the mother was ordered to puſh on; and as ſhe had to go by herſelf, ſhe was much perplexed what courſe to take, as there

was

was no path by which ſhe could be directed: in this dilemma, ſhe concluded to keep as ſtraight forward as poſſible, and after ſome ſpace of time, ſhe had the ſatisfaction of overtaking the others. The pilot then made a ſhort ſtay, that thoſe who were behind might come up, and the captain handed ſome rum round, giving each a dram, except the two old folks, whom they did not conſider worthy of this notice. Here the captain, who had the chief direction, painted Abner, Jeſſe, Rebecca, and Elizabeth Gilbert, jun. and preſented each with a belt of wampum, as a token of their being received into favour, although they took from them all their hats and bonnets, except Rebecca's.

The priſoners were releaſed from the heavy loads they had heretofore been compelled to carry, and was it not for the treatment they expected on their approaching the Indian towns, and the hardſhip of a ſeparation, their ſituation would have been tolerable; but the horror of their minds, ariſing from the dreadful yells of the Indians, as they approached the hamlets, is eaſier conceived than deſcribed, for they were no ſtrangers to the cuſtomary cruelty exerciſed upon captives on entering their towns: the Indians, men, women, and children, collect together, bringing clubs and ſtones, in order to beat them, which they uſually do with great ſeve-

rity, by way of revenge for their relations who have been ſlain; this is performed immediately upon their entering the village where the warriors reſide: this treatment cannot be avoided, and the blows, however cruel, muſt be borne without complaint, and the priſoners are ſorely beaten, until their enemies are wearied with the cruel ſport. Their ſufferings were in this caſe very great, they received ſeveral wounds, and two of the women, who were on horſeback, were much bruiſed by falling from their horſes, which were frightened by the Indians. Elizabeth, the mother, took ſhelter by the ſide of one of them, but upon his obſerving that ſhe met with ſome favour upon his account, he ſent her away; ſhe then received ſeveral violent blows, ſo that ſhe was almoſt diſabled. The blood trickled from their heads in a ſtream, their hair being cropt cloſe, and the cloaths they had on, in rags, made their ſituation truly piteous: whilſt they were inflicting this revenge upon the captives, the king came, and put a ſtop to any further cruelty, by telling them, "It was ſufficient," which they immediately attended to.

Benjamin Gilbert, and Elizabeth his wife, Jeſſe Gilbert, and his wife, were ordered to Captain Rowland Monteur's houſe; the women belonging to it were kind to them, and gave them ſomething to eat: Sarah Gilbert,

Jeſſe's

Jeſſe's wife, was taken from them by three women, in order to be placed in the family ſhe was to be adopted by.

Two officers from Niagara Fort, Captains Dace and Powel, came to ſee the priſoners, and prevent (as they were informed) any abuſe that might be given them: Benjamin Gilbert informed theſe officers, that he was apprehenſive they were in great danger of being murdered, upon which they promiſed him they would ſend a boat the next day, to bring them to Niagara.

24th. Notwithſtanding the kind intention of the officers, they did not derive the expected advantage from it, for the Indians inſiſted on their going to the fort on foot, although the bruiſes they had received the day before, from the many ſevere blows given them, rendered their journey on foot very diſtreſſing; but Captain Monteur obſtinately perſiſting, they dared not long remonſtrate, or refuſe.

When they left the Indian town, ſeveral iſſued from their huts after them, with ſticks in their hands, yelling and ſcreeching in a moſt diſmal manner; but through the interpoſition of four Indian women, who had come with the captives, to prevent any further abuſe they might receive, they were preſerved: one of them walking between Benjamin Gilbert and his wife, led them,

and desired Jesse to keep as near them as he could; the other three walked behind, and prevailed with the young Indians to desist. They had not pursued their route long, before they saw Captain John Powel, who came from his boat, and persuaded (though with some difficulty) the Indians to get into it, with the captives, which relieved them from the apprehensions of further danger. After reaching the fort, Captain Powel introduced them to Col. Guy Johnson, and Col. Butler, who asked the prisoners many questions, in the presence of the Indians. They presented the Captain with a belt of wampum, which is a constant practice among them, when they intend a ratification of the peace. Before their connexion with Europeans, these belts were made of shells, found on the coasts of New-England and Virginia, which were sawed out into beads of an oblong shape, about a quarter of an inch long, which, when strung together on leathern strings, and these strings fastened with fine threads made of sinews, compose what is called a belt of wampum: but since the whites have gained footing among them, they make use of the common glass beads for this purpose.

The Indians, according to their usual custom and ceremony, at three separate times, ordered the prisoners to shake hands with Col. Johnson.

25th.

25th. Benjamin Gilbert, Elizabeth his wife, and Jeſſe Gilbert, were ſurrendered to Col. Johnſon: this deliverance from ſuch ſcenes of diſtreſs, as they had become acquainted with, gave them a more free opportunity of cloſe reflection than heretofore.

The many ſorrowful days and nights they had paſſed, the painful anxiety attendant on their frequent ſeparation from each other, and the uncertainty of the fate of the reſt of their family, overwhelmed them with grief.

26th. Expreſſion is too weak to deſcribe their diſtreſs, on leaving their children with theſe hard maſters; they were not unacquainted with many of the difficulties, to which they would neceſſarily be expoſed in a reſidence amongſt Indians, and the loſs which the young people would ſuſtain, for want of a civilized and Chriſtian education.

27th. In this deſponding ſituation, the kindneſs of ſympathy was awakened in one of the Indian women, who even forgot her prejudices, and wiped away the tears which trickled down Elizabeth Gilbert's cheeks.

The particular attention of Col. Johnſon's houſekeeper to them, from a commiſeration of their diſtreſs, claims their remembrance: Benjamin, his wife, and Jeſſe Gilbert, were invited to her houſe, where ſhe not only gave the old folks her beſt room, but ad-

miniſtered to their neceſſities, and endeavoured to ſooth their ſorrows.

Jeſſe Gilbert was favoured to get employ, which, as it was ſome alleviation of his misfortunes, may be conſidered as a providential kindneſs.

28th. A few days after they came to the fort, they had information that Benjamin Peart was by the river ſide with the Indians; upon hearing this report, his mother went to ſee him, but every attempt for his releaſe was in vain, the Indians would by no means give him up. From this place they intended to march with their priſoner to the Geneſee River, about an hundred miles diſtance. As the affectionate mother's ſolicitations proved fruitleſs, her ſon not only felt the afflicting loſs of his wife and child, from whom he had been torn ſome time before, but a renewal of his grief, on this ſhort ſight of his parent: ſhe procured him a hat, and alſo ſome ſalt, which was an acceptable burden for the journey.

Benjamin Gilbert, converſing with the Indian captain who made them captives, obſerved that he might ſay what none of the other Indians could, "That he had brought in the "oldeſt man, and the youngeſt child;" his reply to this was expreſſive; "It was not I, "but the great God who brought you "through, for we were determined to kill "you, but were prevented."

The

The Britiſh officers being acquainted that Jeſſe Gilbert's wife was among the Indians, with great tenderneſs agreed to ſeek her out, and after a diligent inquiry, found that ſhe was among the Delawares; they went to them, and endeavoured to agree upon terms for her releaſement; the Indians brought her to the fort the next day, but would not give her up to her relations.

29th. As the cabins of the Indians were but two miles from the fort, they went thither, and Jeſſe and the officers uſed every argument in their power to prevail upon them, repreſenting how hard it was to part theſe two young people; at length they conſented to bring her in next day, with their whole tribe, for a final releaſe.

30th. They accordingly came, but ſtarted ſo many objections, that ſhe was obliged to return with them.

31ſt. Early next morning Capt. Robeſon generouſly undertook to procure her liberty, which, after much attention and ſolicitude, he, together with Lieutenant Hillyard, happily accompliſhed. They gave the Indians ſeveral ſmall preſents, and gave them thirty pounds as a ranſom.

When Sarah Gilbert had obtained her liberty, ſhe altered her dreſs more in character for her ſex, than ſhe had been able to do whilſt amongſt the Indians, and went to her

husband and parents at Col. Johnson's, where she was joyfully received.

Col. Johnson's housekeeper continued her kind attentions to them, during their stay here, and procured clothing for them from the king's stores.

6th Month, 1st. About this time the Senecas, among whom Elizabeth Peart was captive, brought her with them to the fort; as soon as the mother heard of it, she went to her, and had some conversation with her, but could not learn where she was to be sent to; she then inquired of the interpreter, and pressed on his friendship, to learn what was to become of her daughter; this request he complied with, and informed her that she was to be given away to another family of the Senecas, and adopted among them, in the place of a deceased relation. Capt. Powel interested himself in her case likewise, and offered to purchase her of them, but the Indians refused to give her up; and as the mother and daughter expected they should see each other no more, their parting was very affecting.

The Indian woman who had adopted Rebecca as her daughter, came also to the fort, and Elizabeth Gilbert made use of this opportunity to inquire concerning her daughter; the interpreter informed her, there was no probability of obtaining the enlargement of her child, as the Indians would not part with

with her: all ſhe could do, was, to recommend her to their notice, as very weakly, and of conſequence not able to endure much fatigue.

2d. and 3d. Not many days after their arrival at Niagara, a veſſel came up Lake Ontario to the fort, with orders for the priſoners to go to Montreal. In this veſſel came one Capt. Brant, an Indian chief, high in rank amongſt them. Elizabeth Gilbert immediately applied herſelf to ſolicit and intereſt him on behalf of her children, who yet remained in captivity; he readily promiſed her to uſe his endeavours to procure their liberty. A ſhort time before they ſailed for Montreal, they received accounts of Abner and Elizabeth Gilbert the younger, but it was alſo underſtood that their poſſeſſors were not diſpoſed to give them up. As the proſpect of obtaining the releaſe of their children was ſo very diſcouraging, it was no alleviation to their diſtreſs, to be removed to Montreal, where, in all probability, they would ſeldom be able to gain any information reſpecting them; on which account they were very ſolicitous to ſtay at Niagara, but the Colonel ſaid they could not remain there, unleſs the ſon would enter into the king's ſervice; this could not be conſented to, therefore they choſe to ſubmit to every calamity which might be permitted to befal them, and confide in the great controller of events.

Here

Here they became acquainted with one Jeſſe Pawling, from Pennſylvania, who was an officer among the Britiſh, and behaved with kindneſs and reſpect to the priſoners, which induced them to requeſt his attention alſo to that part of the family remaining in captivity; it appeared to them of ſome conſequence to gain an additional friend. The Colonel alſo gave his promiſe to exert himſelf on their behalf.

After continuing ten days at Col. Johnſon's, they took boat in the forenoon of the 2d, being the 6th day of the week, and croſſed the river Niagara, in order to go on board the veſſel, which lay in Lake Ontario, for Montreal. The officers procured neceſſaries for their voyage in great plenty, and they were alſo furniſhed with orders to draw more at certain places, as they might have occaſion: theſe civilities may appear to many to be too trivial to be mentioned in this narrative; but thoſe who have been in equal diſtreſs, will not be inſenſible of their value.

4th. The veſſel ſailed down the Lake on the ſixth day of the week, and on firſt-day following, being the fourth day of the ſixth month, 1780, came to Carlton Iſland, where there were ſuch a number of ſmall boats, which brought proviſions, that it had the appearance of a fleet. Benjamin Gilbert and Jeſſe went on ſhore to obtain leave from the

the commanding officer to go to Montreal in the ſmall boats, as the veſſel they came in could proceed no further: they met with a kind reception, and their requeſt was granted.

5th. On ſecond day following, they left Carlton Iſland, which lies at the mouth of Lake Ontario, and took their paſſage in open boats down the river St. Laurence, and paſſed a number of ſmall iſlands. There is a rapid deſcent in the waters of this river, which appears dangerous to thoſe unacquainted with theſe kind of falls. The Frenchmen, who rowed the boats, kept them near the ſhore, and paſſed without much difficulty between the rocks.

6th, 7th, and 8th. Benjamin Gilbert had been much indiſpoſed before they left the fort, and his diſorder was increaſed by a rain which fell on their paſſage, as they were without any covering. They paſſed Oſwagatchy, an Engliſh garriſon, by the ſide of the river, but they were not permitted to ſtop here; they proceeded down the St. Laurence, and the rain continuing, went on ſhore on an iſland, in order to ſecure themſelves from the weather: here they made a ſhelter for Benjamin Gilbert, and when the rain ceaſed, a place was prepared for him in the boat, that he might lie down with more eaſe. His bodily weakneſs made ſuch rapid progreſs, that it

it rendered all the care and attention of his wife neceſſary, and likewiſe called forth all her fortitude; ſhe ſupported him in her arms, affording every poſſible relief to mitigate his extreme pains: and although in this diſtreſſed condition, he, notwithſtanding, gave a ſatisfactory evidence of the virtue and power of a patient and holy reſignation, which can diſarm the king of terrors, and receive him as a welcome meſſenger. Thus prepared, he paſſed from this ſtate of probation, the eighth day of the ſixth month, 1780, in the evening, leaving his wife and two children, who were with him, in all the anxiety of deep diſtreſs, although they had no doubt, but that their loſs was his everlaſting gain. Being without a light in the boat, the darkneſs of the night added not a little to their melancholy ſituation. As there were not any others with Elizabeth Gilbert but her children, and the four Frenchmen who managed the boat, and her apprehenſions alarmed her, leſt they ſhould throw the corpſe overboard, as they appeared to be an unfeeling company; ſhe therefore applied to ſome Britiſh officers who were in a boat behind them, who diſpelled her fears, and received her under their protection.

9th. In the morning they paſſed the garriſon of Coeur de Lac, and waited for ſome conſiderable time a ſmall diſtance below it.

'Squire

'Squire Campbell, who had the charge of the priſoners, when he heard of Benjamin Gilbert's deceaſe, ſent Jeſſe to the commandant of this garriſon to get a coffin, in which they put the corpſe, and very haſtily interred him under an oak nor far from the fort. The boat-men would not allow his widow to pay the laſt tribute to his memory, but, regardleſs of her affliction, refuſed to wait; her diſtreſs on this occaſion was great indeed, but being ſenſible that it was her duty to ſubmit to the diſpenſations of an over-ruling providence, which are all ordered in wiſdom, ſhe endeavoured to ſupport herſelf under her afflictions, and proceeded with the boat-men.

Near this place they paſſed by a griſt-mill, which is maintained by a ſtone wing extended into the river St. Laurence; the ſtream being very rapid, acquires a force ſufficient to turn the wheel, without the further expence of a dam.

The current carried their boat forwards with amazing rapidity, and the falls became ſo dangerous, that the boats could proceed no further; they therefore landed in the evening, and went to the commanding officer of fort Laſheen to requeſt a lodging, but the houſes in the garriſon were ſo crowded, that it was with difficulty they obtained a ſmall room belonging to the boat-builders to retire to, and here they ſtowed themſelves with ten others.

10th. The

10th. The garriſon of Laſheen is on the iſle of Jeſu, on which the town of Montreal ſtands, about the diſtance of nine miles; hither our travellers had to go by land, and as they were entirely unacquainted with the road, they took the advantage of an empty cart (which was going to the town) for the women to ride in.

The land in this neighbourhood is very ſtoney, and the ſoil thin; the cattle ſmall, and ill-favoured.

When they arrived at Montreal, they were introduced to Brigadier General M'Clean, who after examining them, ſent them to one Duqueſne, an officer amongſt the loyaliſts, who being from home, they were deſired to wait in the yard until he came; this want of politeneſs gave them no favourable impreſſions of the maſter of the houſe; when he returned he read their paſs, and gave Jeſſe an order for three days proviſions.

Daniel M'Ulphin received them into his houſe; by him they were treated with great kindneſs, and the women continued at his houſe, and worked five weeks for him.

Jeſſe Gilbert met with employ at Thomas Buſby's, where he lived very agreeably for the ſpace of nine months.

Elizabeth Gilbert had the ſatisfaction of an eaſy employ at Adam Scott's, merchant, having the ſuperintendance of his kitchen; but about

about ſix weeks after ſhe engaged in his ſervice, Jeſſe's wife Sarah was taken ſick at Thomas Buſby's, which made it neceſſary for her mother to diſengage herſelf from the place where ſhe was ſo agreeably ſituated, in order to nurſe her. Theſe three were favoured to be conſidered as the king's priſoners, having rations allowed them; this aſſiſtance was very comfortable; but Elizabeth's name being eraſed out of the liſt at a time when they needed an additional ſupply, they were much ſtraightened: upon an application to one Col. Campbell, he, together with 'Squire Campbell, took down a ſhort account of her ſufferings and ſituation, and after preparing a conciſe narrative, they applied to the Brigadier General, to forward it to General Haldimand at Quebec, deſiring his attention to the ſufferers, who ſpeedily iſſued his orders that the releaſement of the family ſhould be procured, with particular injunctions for every garriſon to furniſh them with neceſſaries as they came down.

As ſoon as Sarah Gilbert recovered from her indiſpoſition, her mother returned to Adam Scott's family.

Thomas Gomerſom hearing of their ſituation, came to ſee them; he was educated a Quaker, and had been a merchant of New-York, and travelled with Robert Walker in his religious viſits; but, upon the commence-

ment

ment of the war, had deviated from his former principles, and had loſt all the appearance of a friend, wearing a ſword: he behaved with reſpect to the priſoners, and made Elizabeth a preſent.

The particular attention of Col. Cloſs, and the care he ſhewed by writing to Niagara, on behalf of the captives, as he was entirely a ſtranger to her, is remembered with gratitude.

As there was an opportunity of hearing from Niagara, it gave them great pleaſure to be informed that Elizabeth Gilbert was amongſt the white people, ſhe having obtained her releaſe from the Indians, prior to the others.

Sarah Gilbert, wife of Jeſſe, becoming a mother, Elizabeth left the ſervice ſhe was engaged in, Jeſſe having taken a houſe, that ſhe might give her daughter every neceſſary attendance; and in order to make their ſituation as comfortable as poſſible, they took a child to nurſe, which added a little to their income. After this, Elizabeth Gilbert hired herſelf to iron a day for Adam Scott; whilſt ſhe was at her work, a little girl belonging to the houſe, acquainted her that there were ſome who wanted to ſee her, and, upon entering into the room, ſhe found ſix of her children; the joy and ſurpriſe ſhe felt on this occaſion were beyond what we ſhall

attempt

attempt to deſcribe. A meſſenger was ſent to inform Jeſſe and his wife, that Joſeph Gilbert, Benjamin Peart, Elizabeth his wife, and young child, Abner and Elizabeth Gilbert the younger, were with their mother. It muſt afford very pleaſing reflections to any affectionate diſpoſition, to dwell a while on this ſcene, that after a captivity of upwards of fourteen months, ſo happy a meeting ſhould take place.

Thomas Peart, who had obtained his liberty, and tarried at Niagara, that he might be of ſervice to the two yet remaining in captivity, viz. Benjamin Gilbert, jun. and Rebecca Gilbert.

Abigail Dodſon, the daughter of a neighbouring farmer, who was taken with them, having inadvertently informed the Indians ſhe was not of the Gilbert family, all attempts for her liberty were fruitleſs.

We ſhall now proceed to relate how Joſeph Gilbert, the eldeſt ſon of the deceaſed, fared amongſt the Indians: he, with Thomas Peart, Benjamin Gilbert, jun. and Jeſſe Gilbert's wife Sarah, were taken along the Weſtward Path, as before related; after ſome ſhort continuance in this path, Thomas Peart and Joſeph Gilbert were taken from the other two, and by a different route, through many difficulties, they were brought to Caracadera, where they received the inſults of the women

and

and children, whoſe huſbands or parents had fallen in their hoſtile excurſions.

Joſeph Gilbert was ſeparated from his companion, and removed to an Indian villa, called Nundow, about ſeven miles from Caracadera; his reſidence was, for ſeveral weeks, in the king's family, whoſe hamlet was ſuperior to the other ſmall huts. The king himſelf brought him ſome hommony, and treated him with great civility, intending his adoption into the family, in the place of one of his ſons, who was ſlain when General Sullivan drove them from their habitations. As Nundow was not to be the place of his abode, his quarters were ſoon changed, and he was taken back to Caracadera; but his weakneſs of body was ſo great, that he was two days accompliſhing this journey, which was only ſeven miles, and not able to procure any other food than roots and herbs, the Indian oeconomy leaving them without any proviſions to ſubſiſt on. Here they adopted him into the family of one of the king's ſons, informing him, that if he would marry amongſt them, he ſhould enjoy the privileges which they enjoyed; but this propoſal he was not diſpoſed to comply with; and as he was not over anxious to conceal his diſlike to them, the ſufferings he underwent were not alleviated. The manner of his life differing ſo much from what he had before

before been accuſtomed to, having to eat the wild roots and herbs before-mentioned, and as he had been lame from a child, and ſubject to frequent indiſpoſitions, it was requiſite for him to pay more attention to his weak habit of body, than his captors were willing he ſhould. When the maſter of the family was at home, the reſpect he ſhewed to Joſeph, and his kindneſs to him, rendered his ſituation more tolerable than in his abſence. Frequently ſuffering with hunger, the privilege of a plenteous table appeared to him as an ineſtimable bleſſing, which claimed the warmeſt devotion of gratitude: in ſuch a diſtreſſed ſituation, the hours rolled over with a tedioufneſs almoſt inſupportable, as he had no agreeable employ to relieve his mind from the reflections of his ſorrowful captivity: this manner of life continued about three months, and when they could no longer procure a ſupply by their hunting, neceſſity compelled them to go to Niagara Fort for proviſion. The greater number of the Indians belonging to Caracadera attended on this journey, in order to obtain a ſupply of proviſions; their want of oeconomy being ſo great, as to have conſumed ſo early as the eighth month all they had raiſed the laſt year, and the preſent crops unfit to gather: their profuſe manner of uſing their ſcant pittance of proviſion, generally introducing a famine,

famine, after a ſhort time of feaſting. They compute the diſtance from Caracadera, to Niagara fort, to be of 130 miles; on this journey they were upwards of five days, taking ſome veniſon in their route, and feaſting with great greedineſs, as they had been a long time without meat.

When they reached the fort, they procured clothing from the king's ſtores for Joſeph Gilbert, ſuch as the Indians uſually wear themſelves, a match-coat, leggings, &c. His indiſpoſition confined him at Col. Johnſon's for ſeveral days, during which time the Britiſh officers endeavoured to agree with the Indians for his releaſement, but they would not conſent. The afflicting account of the death of his father, which was here communicated to him, ſpread an additional gloom on his mind. After continuing at the fort about four weeks, the Indians ordered him back with them; this was a ſore ſtroke, to leave a degree of eaſe and plenty, and reſume the hardſhips of an Indian life: with this uncomfortable proſpect before him, added to his lameneſs, the journey was toilſome and painful. They were five days in their return, and when they arrived, their corn was ripe for uſe; this, with the advantage of hunting, as the game was in its greateſt perfection, furniſhed a preſent comfortable ſubſiſtence.

Joſeph

Joſeph had permiſſion to viſit his fellow captive, Thomas Peart, who was at a ſmall town of the Indians, about ſeven miles diſtance, called Nundow, to whom he communicated the ſorrowful intelligence of their mother's widowed ſituation.

At the firſt approach of ſpring, Joſeph Gilbert and his adopted brother employed themſelves in procuring rails, and repairing the fence about the lot of ground they intended to plant with corn; as this part of preſerving the grain was allotted to them, the planting and culture was aſſigned to the women, their huſbandry being altogether performed by the hoe.

The Indian manner of life was by no means agreeable to Joſeph Gilbert; their irregularity in their meals was hard for him to bear; when they had proviſions in plenty, they obſerved no plan of domeſtic oeconomy, but indulged their voracious appetites, which ſoon conſumed their ſtock, and a famine ſucceeded.

In the early part of the ſixth month, 1781, their corn was ſpent, and they were obliged to have recourſe again to the wild herbage and roots, and were ſo reduced for want of proviſion, that the Indians having found the carcaſe of a dead horſe, they took the meat and roaſted it.

An officer from the fort came down to inquire into the ſituation of the Indians, upon

obſerving the low condition Joſeph was in, not being likely to continue long without ſome relief, which the officer privately afforded, he being permitted to frequent his houſe, he adviſed him by flight to endeavour an eſcape from the Indians, informing him that he had no other expedient for his releaſe; this confirmed him in a reſolution he had for ſome time been contemplating, but his lameneſs and weak habit, for want of proper ſuſtenance, rendered it impracticable to make ſuch an attempt at that time, and it would require much care and attention to his own health and ſtrength, to gather ſufficient for ſuch an undertaking; he therefore made uſe of the liberty allowed him to viſit the officer, and partake of his kindneſs and aſſiſtance, that he might be prepared for the journey.

Embracing a favourable opportunity, when the men were generally from home, ſome in their war expeditions, and ſome out hunting, he left them one night whilſt the family ſlept, and made the beſt of his way towards Niagara fort, following the path, as he had once before gone along it. Having a ſmall piece of bread which he took from the hut, he made a haſty repaſt, travelling day and night, in order to eſcape from the further diſtreſſes of captivity. As he neither took any ſleep, or other food by the way than the

piece

piece of bread mentioned, for the two days and nights he purſued his journey, he was much fatigued when he reached the fort, and he experienced the effects for ſeveral days. Upon his applying to Col. Johnſon, he was hoſpitably entertained, and the next day ſaw three of the Indians whom he had left at the town when he ſet off.

After a few days ſtay here, as moſt of the family were diſcharged from captivity, and waiting for a paſſage to Montreal, a veſſel was fitted to take them on board, in order to proceed down the lake.

We come next to Benjamin Peart, who remained the firſt night after his arriving at the Indian huts, with his wife and child, but was ſeparated from them the next day, and taken about a mile and an half, and preſented to one of the families of the Seneca nation, and afterwards introduced to one of their chiefs, who made a long harangue, which Benjamin did not underſtand. The Indians then gave him to a Squaw, in order to be received as her adopted child, who ordered him to a private hut, where the women wept over him in remembrance of the relation in whoſe ſtead he was received: after this he went with his mother (by adoption) to Niagara river, about two miles below the great falls, and ſtaid here ſeveral days, then went to the fort on their way to

the Geneſee River, where he had the pleaſure of converſing with his mother, and receiving information concerning his wife and child; but even this ſatisfaction was ſhort-lived, for he neither could obtain permiſſion to viſit his wife, nor was he allowed to converſe freely with his mother, as the Indians hurried him on board their bark canoes, where having placed their proviſions, they proceeded with expedition down the Lake to the mouth of the Geneſee River; the computed diſtance from the ſmall village to the mouth of the river being one hundred miles, and from thence up the Geneſee to the place of their deſtination, thirty miles; in their paſſage up the river they were about five days, and as the falls in this river near its entrance into Lake Ontario has made a carrying-place of about two miles, they dragged their canoe this diſtance to the place of boating above the falls. There were nine Indians of the party with them. They frequently caught fiſh by the way.

It no doubt was a ſore affliction to Benjamin to be ſo far removed from his wife and child whilſt among the Indians: patience and reſignation alone could endure it.

When the party arrived at the place of their deſigned ſettlement, they ſoon erected a ſmall hut or wigwam, and the ground being rich and level, they began with their plan-

plantation of Indian corn. Two white men who had been taken priſoners, the one from Suſquehanna, the other from Miniſinks, both in Pennſylvania, lived near his new ſettlement, and were allowed by the Indians to uſe the horſes, and plant for themſelves. Theſe men lightened the toil of Benjamin Peart's ſervitude, as he was frequently in their company, and he had the liberty of doing ſomething for himſelf, though without much ſucceſs.

His new habitation, as it was not very healthy, introduced freſh difficulties, for he had not continued here long, before he was afflicted with ſickneſs, which preyed upon him near three months, the Indians repeatedly endeavouring to relieve him by their knowledge in ſimples, but their endeavours proved ineffectual; the approach of the winter ſeaſon afforded the relief ſought for. Their proviſion was not very tempting to a weakly conſtitution, having nothing elſe than hommony, and but ſhort allowance even of that, inſomuch that when his appetite increaſed, he could not procure food ſufficient to recruit his ſtrength. The company of his brother Thomas Peart, who viſited him, was a great comfort, and as the town he lived at was but the diſtance of eighteen miles, they had frequent opportunities of condoling with each other in their diſtreſs.

The Indian men being abſent on one of their war excurſions, and the women employed in gathering the corn, left Benjamin Peart much leiſure to reflect in ſolitude.

Towards the beginning of the winter ſeaſon the men returned, and built themſelves a log houſe for a granary, and then removed about twenty miles from their ſettlement into the hunting country, and procured a great variety of game, which they uſually eat without bread or ſalt. As he had been with the Indians for ſeveral months, their language became more familiar to him.

Hunting and feaſting after their manner being their only employ, they ſoon cleared the place where they ſettled of the game, which made a ſecond removal neceſſary, and they are ſo accuſtomed to this wandering life, that it becomes their choice.

They fixed up a log hut in this ſecond hunting-place, and continued until the ſecond month, when they returned to their firſt ſettlement, though their ſtay was but a few days, and then back again to their log hut.

A heavy rain falling melted ſome of the ſnow, which had covered the ground about two feet deep.

The whole family concluded upon a journey to Niagara Fort by land, which was completed in ſeven days. At the fort he had the ſatisfaction of converſing with his brother

ther Thomas Peart, and the ſame day his wife alſo came from Buffalo Creek, with the Senecas to the fort; this happy meeting, after an abſence of ten months, drew tears of joy from them. He made an inquiry after his child, as he had neither heard from it or the mother ſince their ſeparation. The Indians not approving of their converſing much together, as they imagined they would remember their former ſituation, and become leſs contented with their preſent manner of life, they ſeparated them again the ſame day, and took Benjamin's wife about four miles diſtance; but the party with whom he came, permitted him to ſtay here ſeveral nights; and when the Indians had completed their purpoſe of traffick, they returned, taking him ſome miles back with them to one of their towns; but upon his telling them he was deſirous of returning to the fort to procure ſomething he had before forgot, in order for his journey, he was permitted. As he ſtaid the night, his adopted brother the Indian came for him; but upon his complaining that he was ſo lame as to prevent his travelling with them, they ſuffered him to remain behind.

He continued at the fort about two months before the Indians came back again, and as he laboured for the white people, he had an opportunity of procuring ſalt proviſion from

the king's ſtores, which had been for a long time a dainty to him.

When one of the Indians (a ſecond adopted brother) came for him, Benjamin went with him to Capt. Powel, who with earneſt ſolicitations, and ſome preſents, prevailed upon the Indian to ſuffer him to ſtay until he returned from his war expedition; but this was the laſt he ever made, as he loſt his life on the frontiers of New-York.

After this another Captain (a third adopted brother) came to the fort, and when Benjamin Peart ſaw him, he applied to Adjutant Gen. Wilkinſon to intercede for his releaſe, who accordingly waited upon Col. Johnſon and other officers, to prevail with them to exert themſelves on his behalf; they concluded to hold a council with the Indians for this purpoſe, who, after ſome deliberation, ſurrendered him up to Col. Johnſon, for which he gave them a valuable compenſation.

Benjamin Peart, after his releaſe, was employed in Col. Johnſon's ſervice, and continued with him for ſeveral months. His child had been releaſed for ſome time, and his wife, by earneſt intreaty and plea of ſickneſs, had prevailed with the Indians to permit her to ſtay at the fort, which proved a great conſolation and comfort after ſo long a ſeparation.

About

About the middle of the eighth month there was preparation made for their proceeding to Montreal, as by this time there were ſix of the priſoners ready to go in a ſhip which lay in Lake Ontario, whoſe names were Joſeph Gilbert, Benjamin Peart, his wife and child, Abner Gilbert, and Elizabeth Gilbert the younger. Theſe went on board the veſſel to Charlton Iſland, which is as far as the large veſſels they uſe in the lake can proceed; the remainder of the way (on account of the frequent ſhoals) they are obliged to go in ſmaller boats.

The commanding officer at Niagara procured a ſuitable ſupply of proviſions, and furniſhed them with orders to draw more at the ſeveral garriſons, as occaſion required.

In two days they arrived at the upper end of Charlton Iſland, and went to the commander in chief to ſhew their paſs, and obtain what they were in need of. Afterwards they continued on to the garriſon of Oſwagotchy, by the ſide of the river St. Laurence, in an open boat rowed by four Frenchmen, this claſs of people being chiefly employed in laborious ſervices.

The ſtream was ſo rapid, and full of rocks, that the priſoners were too much alarmed to remain in the boat, and concluded to go on ſhore until they paſſed the danger; but the Frenchmen, who had been accuſtomed to

theſe wild and violent rapids (the longeſt of which is known by the name of the long Sou) kept on board. This ſurpriſing ſcene continued for the diſtance of ſix miles, and they viewed it with a degree of horror, their heads becoming almoſt giddy with the proſpect. When the boats had ſhot the falls, they again went on board, and continued down the river to Cour de Lac. No great diſtance below this they anchored, and landed at the place where their father was interred, ſhedding many tears of filial affection to his memory. They afterwards applied to the commanding officer of the garriſon for proviſions and other neceſſaries; they then bid adieu to this ſolemn ſpot of ſorrow, and proceeded to Laſheen, which they reached the twenty-fourth day of the eighth month, having been eight days on their voyage.

After refreſhing themſelves at this garriſon, they ſet forward on foot for Montreal, which they reached the ſame day. They went to the Brigadier General, and ſhewed him their paſſport, and as ſoon as at liberty, waited on their mother at Adam Scott's, as has been already related.

The ſituation of Elizabeth Peart, wife of Benjamin, and her child, is next to be related.

After ſhe and the child were parted from her huſband, Abigail Dodſon and the child were

were taken ſeveral miles in the night to a little hut, where they ſtaid till morning, and the day following were taken within eight miles of Niagara, where ſhe was adopted into one of the families of Senecas; the ceremony of adoption to her was tedious and diſtreſſing; they obliged her to ſit down with a young man an Indian, and the eldeſt chieftain of the family repeating a jargon of words to her unintelligible, but which ſhe conſidered as ſome form amongſt them of marriage, and this apprehenſion introduced the moſt violent agitations, as ſhe was determined, at all events, to oppoſe any ſtep of this nature; but after the old Indian concluded his ſpeech, ſhe was relieved from the dreadful embarraſſment ſhe had been under, as ſhe was led away by another Indian.

Abigail Dodſon was given the ſame day to one of the families of the Cayuga nation, ſo that Elizabeth Peart ſaw her no more.

The man who led Elizabeth from the company took her into the family for whom they adopted her, and introduced her to her parents, brothers, and ſiſters, in the Indian ſtile, who received her very kindly, and made a grievous lamentation over her according to cuſtom. After ſhe had been with them two days, the whole family left their habitation, and went about two miles to Fort Sluſher, where they ſtaid ſeveral days.

This fort is about one mile above Niagara Falls.

As ſhe was much indiſpoſed, the Indians were detained ſeveral days for her; but as they cared little for her, ſhe was obliged to lie on the damp ground, which prevented her ſpeedy recovery. As ſoon as her diſorder abated of its violence, they ſet off in a bark canoe which they had provided, intending for Buffalo Creek; and as they went ſlowly, they had an opportunity of taking ſome fiſh.

When they arrived at the place of their intended ſettlement, they went on ſhore, and built an houſe.

A few days after they came to this new ſettlement, they returned with Elizabeth to Fort Sluſher, when ſhe was told her child muſt be taken away from her; this was truly afflicting, but all remonſtrances were in vain.

From Fort Sluſher ſhe travelled on foot, carrying her child to Niagara, it being eighteen miles, and in ſultry weather, rendered it a painful addition to the thoughts of parting with her tender offspring. The intent of their journey was to obtain proviſions, and their ſtay at the fort was of ſeveral days continuance. Capt. Powel afforded her an aſylum in his houſe.

The Indians took the child from her, and went with it acroſs the river to adopt it into the

the family they had aſſigned for it, notwithſtanding Capt. Powel, at his wife's requeſt, interceded that it might not be removed from its mother; but as it was ſo young, they returned it to the mother after its adoption, until it ſhould be convenient to ſend it to the family under whoſe protection it was to be placed.

Obtaining the proviſion and other neceſſaries they came to Niagara to trade for, they returned to Fort Sluſher on foot, from whence they embarked in their canoes. It being near the time of planting, they uſed much expedition in this journey.

The labour and drudgery in a family falling to the ſhare of the women, Elizabeth had to aſſiſt the Squaw in preparing the ground, and planting corn.

Their proviſion being ſcant they ſuffered much, and as their dependance for a ſufficient ſupply until the gathering their crop, was on what they ſhould receive from the fort, they were under the neceſſity of making a ſecond journey thither.

They were two days on the road at this time. A ſmall diſtance before they came to the fort, they took her child from her, and ſent it to its deſtined family, and it was ſeveral months before ſhe had an opportunity of ſeeing it again. After being taken from her huſband, to loſe her darling infant, was a

ſevere

ſevere ſtroke: ſhe lamented her condition, and wept ſorely, for which one of the Indians inhumanly ſtruck her. Her Indian father ſeemed a little moved to behold her ſo diſtreſſed; and in order to conſole her, aſſured her they would bring it back again, but ſhe ſaw it not until the ſpring following.

After they had diſpoſed of their peltries; they returned to their habitation by the ſame route which they had come.

With a heart oppreſſed with ſorrow, Elizabeth trod back her ſteps, mourning for her loſt infant; for this idea preſented itſelf continually to her mind; but as ſhe experienced how fruitleſs, nay, how dangerous, ſolicitations in behalf of her child were, ſhe dried up her tears, and pined in ſecret.

Soon after they reached their own habitation, Elizabeth Peart was again afflicted with ſickneſs. At the firſt they ſhewed ſome attention to her complaints; but as ſhe did not ſpeedily recover ſo as to be able to work, they diſcontinued every attention, and built a ſmall hut by the ſide of the corn-field, placing her in it to mind the corn. In this lonely condition ſhe ſaw a white man, who had been made priſoner among the Indians: he informed her that her child was releaſed, and with the white people; this information revived her drooping ſpirits, and a ſhort time after ſhe recovered of her indiſpoſition, but her employment

employment ſtill continued of attending the corn until it was ripe for gathering, which ſhe aſſiſted in. When the harveſt was over, they permitted her to return, and live with them.

A time of plenty commenced, and they lived as if they had ſufficient to laſt the year through, faring plenteouſly every day.

A drunken Indian came to the cabin one day, and the old Indian woman complaining to him of Elizabeth, his behaviour exceedingly terrified her; he ſtormed like a fury, and at length ſtruck her a violent blow, which laid her on the ground; he then began to pull her about, and abuſe her much, when another of the women interpoſed, and reſcued her from further ſuffering: ſuch is the ſhocking effect of ſpirituous liquor on theſe people; it totally deprives them both of ſenſe and humanity.

A tedious winter prevented them from leaving their habitation, and deprived her of the pleaſure of hearing often from her friends, who were very much ſcattered; but a priſoner, who had lately ſeen her huſband, informed her of his being much indiſpoſed at the Geneſee River, which was upwards of one hundred miles diſtance: on receiving this intelligence, ſhe ſtood in need of much conſolation, but had no ſource of comfort, except in her own boſom.

Near

Near the return of ſpring their proviſion failing, they were compelled to go off to the fort for a freſh ſupply, having but a ſmall portion of corn, which they allowanced out once a day.

Through ſnow and ſevere froſt they went for Niagara, ſuffering much from the exceſſive cold. And when they came within a few miles of the fort, which they were four days accompliſhing, they ſtruck up a ſmall wigwam for ſome of the family with the priſoners to live in until the return of the warriors from the fort.

As ſoon as Capt. Powel's wife heard that the young child's mother had come with the Indians, ſhe deſired to ſee her, claiming ſome relationſhip in the Indian way, as ſhe had alſo been a priſoner amongſt them. They granted her requeſt, and Elizabeth was accordingly introduced, and informed that her huſband was returned to the fort, and there was ſome expectations of his releaſe. The ſame day Benjamin Peart came to ſee his wife, but could not be permitted to continue with her, as the Indians inſiſted on her going back with them to their cabin, which, as has been related, was ſome miles diſtant.

Elizabeth Peart was not allowed for ſome days to go from the cabin, but a white family, who had bought her child from the Indians to whom it had been preſented, offered

fered the party with whom Elizabeth was confined a bottle of rum, if they would bring her acroſs the river to her child, which they did, and delighted the fond mother with this happy meeting, as ſhe had not ſeen it for the ſpace of eight months.

She was permitted to ſtay with the family where her child was for two days, when ſhe returned with the Indians to their cabin. After ſome time ſhe obtained a further permiſſion to go to the fort, where ſhe had ſome needle work from the white people, which afforded her a plea for often viſiting it. At length Capt. Powel's wife prevailed with them to ſuffer her to continue a few days at her houſe, and work for her family, which was granted. At the expiration of the time, upon the coming of the Indians for her to return with them, ſhe pleaded indiſpoſition, and by this means they were repeatedly diſſuaded from taking her with them.

As the time of planting drew nigh, ſhe made uſe of a little addreſs to retard her departure; having a ſmall ſwelling on her neck, ſhe applied a poultice, which led the Indians into a belief it was improper to remove her, and they conſented to come again for her in two weeks.

Her child was given up to her ſoon after her arrival at the fort, where ſhe lodged at Capt. Powell's, and her huſband came frequently

ly to visit her, which was a great happiness, as her trials in their separation had been many.

At the time appointed some of the Indians came again, but she still pleaded indisposition, and had confined herself to her bed. One of the women interrogated her very closely, but did not insist upon her going back. Thus several months elapsed, she contriving delays as often as they came.

When the vessel which was to take the other five, among whom were her husband and child, was ready to sail, the officers at Niagara concluded she might also go with them, as they saw no reasonable objection, and they doubted not but it was in their power to satisfy those Indians, who considered her as their property.

Abner Gilbert, another of the captives, when the company had reached the Indian town within three miles of Niagara Fort, was, with Elizabeth Gilbert the younger, separated from the rest, about the latter part of the 5th month 1780, and were both adopted into John Huston's family, who was of the Cayuga nation. After a stay of three days at or near the settlement of these Indians, they removed to a place near the great falls, which is about eighteen miles distant from the fort, and loitered here three days more; they then crossed the river, and settled near its banks, clearing a piece of land, and prepared

pared it by the hoe for planting. Until they could gather their corn, their dependance was entirely upon the fort.

After the ſpace of three weeks, they packed up their moveables, which they generally carry with them in their rambles, and went down the river to get proviſions at Butlerſbury, a ſmall village built by Col. Butler, and is on the oppoſite ſide of the river to Niagara Fort. They ſtaid one night at the village, obſerving great caution that none of the white people ſhould converſe with the priſoners. Next day, after tranſacting their buſineſs, they returned to their ſettlement, and continued there but about one week, when it was concluded they muſt go again for Butlerſbury; after they had left their habitation a ſmall diſtance, the head of the family met with his brother, and as they are very ceremonious in ſuch interviews, the place of meeting was their rendezvous for the day and night. In the morning the family, with the brother before-mentioned, proceeded for Butlerſbury, and reached it before night. They went to the houſe of an Engliſhman, one John Secord, who was ſtiled brother to the chief of the family, having lived with him ſome time before.

After ſome deliberation, it was agreed that Elizabeth Gilbert ſhould continue in this family till ſent for; this was an agreeable change to her.

Abner

Abner returned with them to the settlement, his employ being to fence and secure the corn-patch; sometimes he had plenty of provisions, but was often in want.

The mistress of the family one day intending for Butlersbury, ordered Abner to prepare to go with her; but she had not gone far before she sent him back. Notwithstanding he had long been inured to frequent disappointments, he was much mortified at returning, as he expected to have seen his sister. When the woman came home, she gave him no information about her, and all inquiries on his part would have been fruitless.

The place they had settled at served for a dwelling until fall, and as it was not very far distant from the fort, by often applying for provision, they were not so much distressed between the failing of their old crop, and the gathering of the new one, as those who lived at a greater distance.

In the fall John Huston, the head of the family, went out hunting, and in his return caught cold from his careless manner of lying in the wet, and thereby lost the use of his limbs for a long time. On being informed of his situation, the family moved to the place where he was; they fixed a shelter over him, as he was unable to move himself, and continued here about a month; but as it was remote from any settlement, and they had to go often to the fort for the necessaries of life, they

they concluded to return to their own habitation. Abner, one Indian man, and ſome of the women, carried the cripple in a blanket about two miles; this was ſo hard a taſk, they agreed to put up a ſmall houſe, and wait for his recovery: But not long after they had an opportunity of conveying him on horſeback to the landing, about nine miles above the fort. As this was their plantation, and the time of gathering their crops, they took in their corn, which, as has been before obſerved, is the buſineſs of the women. Then they changed their quarters, carrying the lame Indian as before in a blanket, down to the river ſide, when they went on board canoes, and croſſed the river, in order to get to their hunting-ground, where they uſually ſpend the winter.

Abner Gilbert lived a droniſh Indian life, idle and poor, having no other employ than the gathering of hickory nuts; and although young, his ſituation was very irkſome.

As ſoon as the family came to the hunting-ground, they patched up a ſlight hut for their reſidence, and employed themſelves in hunting. They took Abner along with them in one of their tours, but they were then unſucceſsful, taking nothing but rackoons and porcupines.

The crop of Indian corn proving too ſcant a pittance for the winter, Abner, on this account,

count had ſome agreeable employ, which was to viſit the fort, and procure a ſupply of proviſions, which continued to be his employment for the remainder of the ſeaſon.

In the ſpring, John Huſton, the Indian who had been lame the whole winter, recovered, and unhappily had it in his power to obtain a ſupply of rum, which he frequently drank to exceſs; and always, when thus debauched, was extravagantly moroſe, quarrelling with the women who were in the family, and at length left them. Soon after his departure, the family moved about 40 miles, near Buffalo Creek, which empties its waters into Lake Erie. At this place Abner heard of his ſiſter, Rebecca Gilbert, who ſtill remained in captivity not far from his new habitation. This was their ſummer reſidence; they therefore undertook to clear a piece of land, in which they put corn, pumpkins and ſquaſhes.

Abner, having no uſeful employ, amuſed himſelf with catching fiſh in the lake, and furniſhed the family with frequent meſſes of various kinds, which they eat without bread or ſalt; for the diſtance of this ſettlement from the fort prevented them from obtaining proviſions ſo frequently as neceſſary. Capt. John Powel and Thomas Peart, (the latter had by this time obtained his releaſe from the Indians) and ſeveral others, came among the Indian ſettlements with proviſion and hoes for them. The account of their coming

ing ſoon ſpread amongſt the Indians. The chiefs of every tribe came, bringing with them as many little ſticks as there were perſons in their tribe, to expreſs the number, in order to obtain a juſt proportion of the proviſion to be diſtributed. They are ſaid to be unacquainted with any other power of explaining numbers, than by this ſimple hieroglyphic mode.

It was upwards of a year ſince Abner had been parted from his relations, and as he had not ſeen his brother Tho. Peart in that ſpace of time, this unexpected meeting gave him great joy, but it was of ſhort duration, as they were forced to leave him behind. During the corn ſeaſon he was employed in tending it, and not being of an impatient diſpoſition, he bore his captivity without repining.

In the 7th month, 1781, the family went to Butlerſbury, when Col. Butler treated with the woman who was the head of this family for the releaſe of Abner, which ſhe at length conſented to, on receiving ſome preſents, but ſaid he muſt firſt return with her, and ſhe would deliver him up in twenty days. Upon their return, ſhe gave Abner the agreeable information that he was to be given up. This added a ſpur to his induſtry, and made his labour light.

Some days before the time agreed on, they proceeded for Butlerſbury, and went

to

to John Secord's, where his ſiſter Elizabeth Gilbert had been from the time mentioned in the former part of this narrative.

Abner was diſcharged by the Indians ſoon after his arrival at the Engliſh village, and John Secord permitted him to live in his family with his ſiſter. With this family they continued two weeks, and as they were under the care of the Engliſh officers, they were permitted to draw clothing and proviſions from the king's ſtores.

Afterwards Benj. Peart and his brother Thomas, who were both releaſed, came over for their brother and ſiſter at John Secord's, and went with them to Capt. Powel's, in order to be nearer to the veſſel they were to go in to Montreal.

The next of the family who comes within notice, is Elizabeth Gilbert, the ſiſter. From the time of her being firſt introduced by the Indian into the family of John Secord, who was one in whom he placed great confidence. She was under the neceſſity of having new clothes, as thoſe ſhe had brought from home were much worn. Her ſituation in the family where ſhe was placed was comfortable. After a few days reſidence with them, ſhe diſcovered where the young child was, that had ſome time before been taken from its mother Elizabeth Peart, as before-mentioned; and herſelf, together with John Secord's wife with whom

whom she lived, and Capt. Fry's wife went to see it, in order to purchase it from the Indian woman who had it under her care; but they could not then prevail with her, though some time after Capt. Fry's wife purchased it for thirteen dollars. Whilst among the Indians it had been for a long time indisposed, and in a lingering distressing situation; but under its present kind protectress, who treated the child as her own, it soon recruited.

Elizabeth Gilbert, jun. lived very agreeably in J. Secord's family rather more than a year, and became so fondly attached to her benefactors, that she usually stiled the mistress of the house her mamma. During her residence here, her brother Abner, and Thomas Peart, came several times to visit her.

The afflicting loss of her father, to whom she was affectionately endeared, and the separation from her mother, whom she had no expectation of seeing again, was a severe trial, although moderated by the kind attentions shewn her by the family in which she lived.

John Secord having some business at Niagara, took Betsy with him, where she had the satisfaction of seeing six of her relations who had been captives, but were most of them released: this happy meeting made the trip to the fort a very agreeable one. She staid with them all night, and then returned.

Not long after this visit, Col. Butler and John Secord sent for the Indian, who claimed Elizabeth as his property, and when he arrived they made overtures to purchase her, but he declared he would not sell his own flesh and blood; for thus they stile those whom they have adopted. They then had recourse to presents, which overcoming his scruples, they obtained her discharge; after which she remained two weeks at Butlersbury, and then went to her mother at Montreal.

Having given a brief relation of the happy release and meeting of such of the captives as had returned from among the Indians, excepting Thomas Peart, whose narrative is deferred, as he was exerting his endeavours for the benefit of his sister and cousin, who still remained behind.

It may not be improper to return to the mother, who with several of her children, were at Montreal. The nurse-child which they had taken, as related in the former part of this account, dying, was a considerable loss to them, as they could not, even by their utmost industry, gain as much any other way.

In the fall of the year 1781, Col. Johnson, Capt. Powell, and some other officers, came to Montreal upon business, and were so kind in their remembrance of the family, as to inquire after them, and to make them some presents, congratulating the mother on the happy

happy releaſement of ſo many of her children. They encouraged her with the information of their agreement with the Indians for the releaſement of her daughter Rebecca, expecting that ſhe was by that time at Niagara; but in this opinion they were miſtaken, as the Indian family who adopted her, valued her too highly to be eaſily prevailed with, and it was a long time after this before ſhe was given up.

Elizabeth Gilbert and her daughters took in clothes to waſh for their ſupport, and being induſtrious and careful, it afforded them a tolerable ſubſiſtence.

Jeſſe Gilbert obtained employ in his trade as a cooper, which yielded a welcome addition to their ſtock.

Elizabeth Gilbert ſuffered no opportunity to paſs her, of inquiring about her friends and relations in Pennſylvania, and had the ſatisfaction of being informed, by one who came from the ſouthward, that friends of Philadelphia had been very aſſiduous in their endeavours to gain information where their family was, and had ſent to the different meetings, deſiring them to inform themſelves of the ſituation of the captivated family, and, if in their power, afford them ſuch relief as they might need.

It gave her great pleaſure to hear of this kind ſympathizing remembrance of their friends, and it would have been eſſentially

ſerviceable to them, could they have reduced it to a certainty.

Deborah Jones, a daughter of Abraham Wing, a friend, ſent for Elizabeth Gilbert, in order to attend her as a nurſe; but her death, which was ſoon after, fruſtrated the proſpect ſhe had of an agreeable place, as this woman was better grounded in friends principles than moſt ſhe had met with; which circumſtance united them in the ties of a cloſe friendſhip: and as Eliz. Gilbert had received many civilities and favours from her, her death was doubly afflicting to their family.

A perſon who came from Crown-Point informed her that Benj. Gilbert, a ſon of the deceaſed by his firſt wife, had come thither, in order to be of what ſervice he could to the family, and had deſired him to make inquiry where they were, and in what ſituation, and ſend him the earlieſt information poſſible.

A ſecond agreeable intelligence ſhe received from Niagara, by a young woman who came from thence, who informed her that her daughter Rebecca was given up to the Engliſh by the Indians. This information muſt have been very pleaſing, as their expectations of her releaſe were but faint; the Indian with whom ſhe lived conſidering her as her own child.

It was not long after this, that Thomas Peart, Rebecca Gilbert, and their couſin Benjamin

Benjamin Gilbert, came to Montreal to the reſt of the family. This meeting, after ſuch ſcenes of ſorrow as they had experienced, was more completely happy than can be expreſſed.

Reflection, if indulged, will ſteadily point out a protecting arm of power to have ruled the various ſtorms which often threatened the family with deſtruction on their paſſage through the wilderneſs, under the controul of the fierceſt enemies, and preſerved and reſtored them to each other, although ſeparated among different tribes and nations: this, ſo great a favour, cannot be conſidered by them but with the warmeſt emotions of gratitude to the great Author.

Rebecca Gilbert and Benjamin Gilbert, jun. were ſeparated from their friends and connections at a place called the Five Mile Meadows, which was ſaid to be that diſtance from Niagara. The Seneca king's daughter, to whom they were allotted in the diſtribution of the captives, took them to a ſmall hut where her father Siangorochti, his queen, and the reſt of the family were, eleven in number. Upon the reception of the priſoners into the family, there was much ſorrow and weeping, as is cuſtomary upon ſuch occaſions, and the higher in favour the adopted priſoners are to be placed, the greater lamentation is made over them.

After three days the family removed to a place called the Landing, on the banks of Niagara River: here they continued two days more, and then two of the women went with the captives to Niagara, to procure clothing from the king's ſtores for them, and permitted them to ride on horſeback to Fort Sluſher, which is about eighteen miles diſtant from Niagara fort. On this journey they had a ſight of the Great Falls of Niagara.

During a ſtay of ſix days at Fort Sluſher, the Britiſh officers and others uſed their utmoſt endeavours to purchaſe them of the Indians: but the Indian king ſaid he would not part with them for one thouſand dollars.

The Indians who claimed Elizabeth Peart came to the fort with her at this time, and, although ſhe was very weakly and indiſpoſed, it was an agreeable opportunity to them both of converſing with each other; but they were not allowed to be frequently together, leſt they ſhould increaſe each other's diſcontent.

Rebecca being dreſſed in the Indian manner, appeared very different from what ſhe had been accuſtomed to: ſhort clothes, leggings, and a gold laced hat.

From Niagara fort they went about eighteen miles above the Falls to fort Erie, a garriſon of the Engliſh, and then continued their journey about four miles further up Buffalo creek,

creek, and pitched their tent. At this place they met with Rebecca's father and mother by adoption, who had gone before on horſe-back. They caught ſome fiſh, and made ſoup of them; but Rebecca could eat none of it, as it was dreſſed without ſalt, and with all the careleſſneſs of Indians.

This ſpot was intended for their plantation, they therefore began to clear the land for the crop of Indian corn. While the women were thus employed, the men built a log-houſe for their reſidence, and then went out hunting.

Notwithſtanding the family they lived with was of the firſt rank among the Indians, and the head of it ſtiled King, they were under the neceſſity of labouring, as well as thoſe of lower rank, although they often had advantages of procuring more proviſions than the reſt. This family raiſed this ſummer about one hundred ſkipple of Indian corn (a ſkipple is about three pecks) equal to ſeventy-five buſhels.

As Rebecca was not able to purſue a courſe of equal labour with the other women, ſhe was favoured by them by often being ſent into their hut to prepare ſomething to eat; and as ſhe dreſſed their proviſions after the Engliſh method, and had erected an oven by the aſſiſtance of the other women, in which they baked their bread, their family fared more agreeably than the others.

Benjamin Gilbert, jun. was conſidered as the king's ſucceſſor, and entirely freed from reſtraint, ſo that he even began to be delighted with his manner of life; and had it not been for the frequent counſel of his fellow captive, he would not have been anxious for a change.

In the waters of the lakes there are various kinds of fiſh, which the Indians take ſometimes with ſpears; but whenever they can obtain hooks and lines, they prefer them.

A fiſh called Ozoondah, reſembling a ſhad in ſhape, but rather thicker, and leſs bony, with which Lake Erie abounded, was often dreſſed for their table, and was of an agreeable taſte, weighing from three to four pounds.

They drew proviſions this ſummer from the forts, which frequently induced the Indians to repair thither. The king, his daughter, grand-daughter, and Rebecca, went together upon one of theſe viſits to Fort Erie, where the Britiſh officers entertained them with a rich feaſt, and ſo great a profuſion of wine, that the Indian king was very drunk; and as he had to manage the canoe in their return, they were repeatedly in danger of being overſet amongſt the rocks in the lake.

Rebecca and Benjamin met with much better fare than the other captives, as the family they lived with were but ſeldom in great

want

want of neceſſaries, which was the only advantage they enjoyed beyond the reſt of their tribe.

Benjamin Gilbert, as a badge of his dignity, wore a ſilver medal pendant from his neck.

The king, queen, and another of the family, together with Rebecca and her couſin Benjamin, ſet off for Niagara, going as far as Fort Sluſher by water, from whence they proceeded on foot, carrying their loads on their backs. Their buſineſs at the fort was to obtain proviſions, which occaſioned them frequently to viſit it, as before related.

Rebecca indulged herſelf with the pleaſing expectation of obtaining her releaſe, or at leaſt permiſſion to remain behind among the whites; but in both theſe expectations ſhe was diſagreeably diſappointed, having to return again with her captors; all efforts for her releaſe being in vain. Col. Johnſon's houſekeeper, whoſe repeated acts of kindneſs to this captivated family have been noticed, made her ſome acceptable preſents.

As they had procured ſome rum to carry home with them, the chief was frequently intoxicated, and always in ſuch unhappy fits behaved remarkably fooliſh.

On their return, Thomas Peart, who was at Fort Niagara, procured for Rebecca an horſe to carry her as far as Fort Sluſher, where they took boat, and got home after a ſtay of nine days.

Soon after their return, Rebecca and her couſin were ſeized with the chill and fever, which held them for near three months. During their indiſpoſition the Indians were very kind to them; and as their ſtrength of conſtitution alone could not check the progreſs of the diſorder, the Indians procured ſome herbs, with which the patients were unacquainted, and made a plentiful decoction; with theſe they waſhed them, and it ſeemed to afford them ſome relief: the Indians accounted it a ſovereign remedy.

The deceaſe of her father, of which Rebecca received an account, continued her in a drooping way a conſiderable time longer than ſhe would otherwiſe have been.

As ſoon as ſhe recovered her health, ſome of the family again went to Niagara, and Rebecca was permitted to be of the company. They ſtaid at the fort about two weeks, and Col. Johnſon exerted himſelf in order to obtain her releaſe, holding a treaty with the Indians for this purpoſe; but his mediation proved fruitleſs: ſhe had therefore to return with many an heavy ſtep. When they came to Lake Erie, where their canoe was, they proceeded by water. While in their boat a number of Indians in a canoe came towards them, and informed them of the death of her Indian father, who had made an expedition to the frontiers of Pennſylvania, and was there wounded by the militia, and afterwards died

died of his wounds; on which occaſion ſhe was under the neceſſity of making a feint of ſorrow, and weeping aloud with the reſt.

When they arrived at their ſettlement, it was the time of gathering their crop of corn, potatoes, pumpkins, and preſerving their ſtore of hickory nuts.

About the beginning of the winter ſome Britiſh officers came amongſt them, and ſtaid with them until ſpring, uſing every endeavour for the diſcharge of the two captives, but ſtill unattended with ſucceſs.

Some time after this another Britiſh officer, attended by Tho. Peart, came with proviſion and hoes for the Indians. It afforded them great happineſs to enjoy the ſatisfaction of each other's converſation, after ſo long an abſence.

Rebecca and her couſin had the additional pleaſure of ſeeing her brother Abner, who came with the family amongſt whom he lived, to ſettle near this place; and as they had not ſeen each other for almoſt twelve months, it proved very agreeable.

Thomas Peart endeavoured to animate his ſiſter, by encouraging her with the hopes of ſpeedily obtaining her liberty: but her hopes were often diſappointed.

An officer amongſt the Britiſh, one Capt. Latteridge, came and ſtaid ſome time with them, and intereſted himſelf on behalf of the priſoners, and appeared in a fair way of obtaining their enlargement; but being ordered

to join his regiment, he was prevented from further attention until his return from duty; and afterwards was commanded by Col. Johnſon to go with him to Montreal on buſineſs of importance, which effectually barred his undertaking any thing further that winter.

It afforded her many pleaſing reflections when ſhe heard that ſix of her relations were freed from their difficulties, and Tho. Peart viſiting her again, contributed in ſome meaſure to re-animate her with freſh hopes of obtaining her own freedom. They fixed upon a ſcheme of carrying her off privately; but when they gave time for a full reflection, it was evidently attended with too great danger, as it would undoubtedly have much enraged the Indians, and perhaps the lives of every one concerned would have been forfeited by ſuch indiſcretion.

During the courſe of this winter ſhe ſuffered many hard ſhips and ſevere diſappointments, and being without a friend to unboſom her ſorrows to, they appeared to increaſe by concealment; but making a virtue of neceſſity, ſhe ſummoned up a firmneſs of reſolution, and was ſupported under her diſcouragement beyond her own expectations.

The youth and inexperience of her couſin did not allow of a ſufficient confidence in him, but ſhe had often to intereſt herſelf in an attention to, and overſight of, his conduct; and it was in ſome meaſure owing to this

this care, that he retained his desires to return amongst his friends.

Col. Butler sent a string of wampum to the Indian chief, who immediately called a number of the other Indians together upon this occasion, when they concluded to go down to Niagara, where they understood the design of the treaty was for the freedom of the remainder of the prisoners; for especial orders were issued by General Haldimand, at Quebec, that their liberty should be obtained. At this Council-Fire it was agreed they would surrender up the prisoners.

When they returned, they informed Rebecca that Col. Butler had a desire to see her, which was the only information she could gain: this being a frequent custom amongst them to offer a very slight surmise of their intentions.

After this the whole family moved about six miles up Lake Erie, where they staid about two months to gather their annual store of maple sugar, of which they made a considerable quantity.

As soon as the season of this business was over, they returned to their old settlement, where they had not continued long, before an Indian came with an account that an astonishing number of young pigeons might be procured at a certain place, by falling trees that were filled with nests of young, and the distance was computed to be about fifty miles.

miles. This information delighted the ſeveral tribes: they ſpeedily joined together, young and old, from different parts, and with great aſſiduity purſued their expedition, and took abundance of the young ones, which they dried in the ſun, and with ſmoke, and filled ſeveral bags which they had taken with them for this purpoſe. Benjamin Gilbert was permitted to accompany them in this excurſion, which muſt have been a curious one for whole tribes to be engaged in. On this rarity they lived with extravagance for ſome time, faring ſumptuouſly every day.

As the time approached, when, according to appointment, they were to return to Niagara, and deliver up the priſoners, they gave Rebecca the agreeable information, in order to allow her ſome time to make preparation. She made them bread for their journey with great cheerfulneſs.

The Indians, to the number of thirty, attended on this occaſion with the two captives. They went as far as Fort Sluſher in a bark canoe. It was ſeveral days before they reached Niagara Fort, as they went ſlowly on foot. After attending at Col. Butler's, and conferring upon this occaſion, in conſideration of ſome valuable preſents made them, they releaſed the two laſt of the captives, Rebecca Gilbert, and Benjamin Gilbert, jun.

As

As ſpeedily as they were enabled, their Indian dreſs was exchanged for the more cuſtomary and agreeable one of the Europeans; and on the third of the ſixth month, 1782, two days after their happy releaſe, ſailed for Montreal.

The narrative of the treatment of Thomas Peart, another of the family, ſtill remains to be given:

He was taken along the weſtward path with the priſoners before-mentioned, viz. Joſeph, Sarah, and Benjamin Gilbert, jun.

Thomas was compelled to carry a heavy load of the plunder which the Indians had ſeized at their farm. When ſeparated from the reſt, they were aſſured they ſhould meet together again in four days.

The firſt day's travel was in an exceeding diſagreeable path, acroſs ſeveral deep brooks, through which Thomas had to carry Sarah and Benjamin Gilbert, jun. This taſk was a very hard one, as he had been much reduced for want of ſufficient nouriſhment.

The firſt night they lodged by the banks of Cayuga Creek, the captives being tied as uſual. The next morning they took a veniſon, and this, with ſome decayed corn which they gathered from the deſerted fields, ſerved them for ſuſtenance. This day's journey was by the ſide of Cayuga Creek, until they came to a ſteep hill, which they aſcended with difficulty.

When

When night came on, they ſought a wigwam which had been deſerted precipitately upon General Sullivan's march againſt the inhabitants of theſe parts.

The land in this neighbourhood is excellent for cultivation, affording very good paſture.

Thomas Peart aſſured the Indians, that he, with the other captives, would not leave them, and therefore requeſted the favour to be freed from their confinement at night; but one of them checked his requeſt, by ſaying he could not ſleep if the captives were ſuffered to be untied.

Their meat being all exhauſted, Thomas and three Indians went near three miles to gather more decayed corn; and this, mouldy as it was, they were obliged to eat, it being their only food, excepting a few winter turnips which they met with. They went forwards a conſiderable diſtance by the ſide of Cayuga Creek, and then with much difficulty croſſed it; immediately afterwards they aſcended an uncommon miry hill, covered with ſprings. Going over this mountain they miſſed the path, and were obliged to wade very heavily through the water and mire.

In the cloſe of the day they came to a fine meadow, where they agreed to continue that night, having no other proviſions than the mouldy Indian corn they accidentally met with

with in the Indian plantations, which had been cut down, and left on the ground by General Sullivan's army.

Next morning they ſet forwards, walking leiſurely on, ſo that the company who went by the other path might overtake them, and frequently ſtopped for them.

When night approached, they came to a large creek where ſome Indians were, who had begun to prepare the ground for planting corn. At this place they ſtaid two nights, and being two indolent to procure game by hunting, their diet was ſtill very poor, and their ſtrength much exhauſted, ſo that they became impatient of waiting for the others, which was their intention when they firſt ſtopped.

After travelling till near noon, they made a ſhort ſtay, ſtripped the bark off a tree, and then painted, in their Indian manner, themſelves and the priſoners on the body of the tree; this done, they ſet up a ſtick with a ſplit at the top, in which they placed a ſmall buſh of leaves, and leaned the ſtick ſo that the ſhadow of the leaves ſhould fall to the point of the ſtick where it was fixed in the ground; by which means the others would be directed in the time of day when they left the place.

Here they ſeparated the priſoners again, thoſe to whom Thomas Peart and Joſeph Gilbert

Gilbert were allotted went weſtward out of the path, but Sarah Gilbert and Benjamin Gilbert, jun. with one Indian, continued in the path. This was very diſtreſſing to Sarah, to be torn from her relations, and deprived of all the comforts, and even neceſſaries of life. Theſe two, with the Indian who had the care of them, after they had parted with the other two, and travelled forward a few miles, came to ſome Indians by the ſide of a creek, who gave them ſomething to eat. The next day the Indian who was their pilot exerted himſelf to obtain ſome proviſions, but his endeavours proved fruitleſs; they therefore ſuffered greatly. At night the Indian aſked Sarah if ſhe had ever eaten horſe-fleſh, or dogs; ſhe replied, ſhe had not: he then further ſurpriſed her by aſking whether ſhe had ever eat man's fleſh; upon her expreſſing her abhorrence, he replied, that he ſhould be under the neceſſity of killing the boy, for he could not procure any deer. This threat, although perhaps not intended to be executed, terrified her exceedingly. He hunted with great diligence, leaving the captives by themſelves, and appeared to ſhudder himſelf at what he had threatened, willing to try every reſource; but notwithſtanding his exertions, her fears prevailed in a very great degree. They went forwards ſlowly,

ſlowly, being very weak; and in addition to their diſtreſs, there fell a very heavy rain, and they were obliged to continue in it, as they were without ſhelter. In this reduced ſituation they at length came to one of the huts at Canodoſago, where they dreſſed the remains of their mouldy corn, and the day after were joined by the part of the company whom they had left ten days before.

As the few days ſolitary ſufferings of Sarah Gilbert had been before unrelated, the foregoing digreſſion, from the narrative of Thomas Peart's, may not be thought improper.

To return to the two who were ſeparated from the path, and had to go forwards acroſs mountains and vallies, ſwamps and creeks.

In the morning they eat the remainder of their corn. The Indians then cut off their hair, excepting a ſmall round tuft on the crown of the head; and, after painting them in the Indian manner, in order to make them appear more terrible, they took from them their hats. Being thus obliged to travel bareheaded in the ſun, they were ſeized with violent head-achs; and this, added to a want of proviſions, was truly diſtreſſing.

When they approached the Indian ſettlements, the Indians began their cuſtomary whooping, to announce their arrival with priſoners; iſſuing their diſmal yells according to the number brought in.

After

After ſome ſhort time an Indian came to them: with him they held a diſcourſe concerning the priſoners and painted them afreſh, part black, and part red, as a diſtinguiſhing mark. When this ceremony was concluded, the Indian who met them returned, and the others continued their route.

As they were not far from the Indian towns, they ſoon ſaw great numbers of the Indians collecting together, though the priſoners were ignorant of the motives.

When they came up to this diſagreeable company, the Indian, who firſt met them, took the ſtring that was about Thomas Peart's neck, with which he had been tied at night, and held him whilſt a Squaw ſtripped off his veſt.

Joſeph Gilbert was ordered to run firſt, but being lame and indiſpoſed, could only walk. The clubs and tomahawks flew ſo thick, that he was ſorely bruiſed, and one of the tomahawks ſtruck him on the head, and brought him to the ground, when a lad of about fifteen years old run after him, and, as he lay, would undoubtedly have ended him, as he had lifted the tomahawk for that purpoſe, but the king's ſon ſent orders not to kill him.

After him, Thomas Peart was ſet off; he ſeeing the horrid ſituation of his brother, was ſo terrified, that he did not recollect the

Indian

Indian ſtill kept hold of the ſtring which was round his neck; but, ſpringing forwards with great force and ſwiftneſs, he pulled the Indian over, who, in return, when he recovered his feet, beat him ſeverely with a club. The lad who was ſtanding with a tomahawk near Joſeph Gilbert, as he paſſed by him, threw his tomahawk with great dexterity, and would certainly have ſtruck him, if he had not ſprung forwards, and avoided the weapon. When he had got oppoſite to one of their huts, they pointed for him to take ſhelter there, where Joſeph Gilbert came to him as ſoon as he recovered. In the room were a number of women, who appeared very ſorrowful, and wept aloud; this, though cuſtomary amongſt them, ſtill added to the terror of the captives, as they imagined it to be no other than a prelude to inevitable deſtruction.

Their hair cropped cloſe, their bodies bruiſed, and the blood guſhing from Joſeph Gilbert's wound, rendered them a horrid ſpectacle to each other.

After the lamentation ceaſed, one of them aſked Thomas Peart, if he was hungry; he replied, he was: they then told him, "You eat by and by." They immediately procured ſome victuals, and ſet it before them; but Joſeph Gilbert's wounds had taken away his appetite.

An

An officer, who was of the French families of Canada, came to them, and brought a negro with him to interpret. After queſtioning them, he concluded to write to Col. Johnſon at Niagara, relative to the priſoners.

The Indians adviſed them to be contented with their preſent ſituation, and marry amongſt them, giving every aſſurance that they ſhould be treated with the utmoſt reſpect: but theſe conditions were inadmiſſible.

After this, Joſeph Gilbert was taken from his brother, as related in the narrative of his ſufferings.

Thomas Peart continued at the village that night, and the next day was given to the care of a young Indian, who went with him about two miles, where ſeveral Indians were collected, dreſſed in horrid maſks, in order, as he ſuppoſed, to make ſport of his fears, if he diſcovered any: he therefore guarded againſt being ſurpriſed, and when they obſerved him not to be intimidated, they permitted him to return again. Not long after arriving at the village, Capt. Rowland Monteur came in, who gave Thomas Peart ſome account how the others of his family had ſuffered, and told him that he had almoſt killed his mother and Jeſſe, on account of Andrew Harrigar's making his eſcape. He had come in before the others, in order to procure

procure ſome proviſions for the company, who were in great need of it.

When the Captain returned, Tho. Peart accompanied him part of the way, and the Captain adviſed him to be cheerful and contented, and work faithful for the friend, for ſo he ſtiled the Indian under whoſe care Thomas Peart was placed, promiſing him that if he complied, he ſhould ſhortly go to Niagara.

They employed him in chopping for ſeveral days, having previous to this taken the ſtring from his neck, which they had carefully ſecured him with every night.

The plantation on which they intended to fix for a ſummer reſidence, and to plant their crop of corn, was ſeveral miles down the Geneſee, or Little River. Prior to their removing with the family, ſome of the men went thither, and built a bark hut, which was expeditiouſly performed, as they executed it in about two days, when they returned to their old habitation.

Thomas Peart was the next day given to the chief Indian, who endeavoured to quiet his apprehenſions, aſſuring him he ſhould meet with kind treatment.

The Indian manner of life is remarkably dirty and louſy; and although they themſelves diſregard their filth, yet it was extremely mortifying to the priſoners to be deprived

deprived of the advantages of cleanlineſs; and this was by no means among the number of ſmaller difficulties.

As Thomas Peart had been accuſtomed to induſtry, and when firſt among the Indians was conſtantly exerting himſelf, either in their active diverſions or uſeful labour, they were much delighted with him. When they had concluded upon ſending him to the family he was to reſide with, they daubed him afreſh with their red paint. He was then taken about ſeven miles, where he was adopted into the family, and ſtiled "Och-"nuſa," or uncle. When the ceremony of adoption was performed, a number of the relatives were ſummoned together, and the head of them took Thomas Peart into the midſt of the aſſembly, and made a long harangue in the Indian language. After this he was taken into the houſe, where the women wept aloud for joy, that the place of a deceaſed relation was again ſupplied.

The old man, whoſe place Thomas Peart was to fill, had never been conſidered by his family as poſſeſſed of any merit; and, ſtrange as it may appear, the perſon adopted always holds, in their eſtimation, the merits or demerits of the deaeaſed, and the moſt careful conduct can never overcome this prejudice.

As ſoon as the ceremony of adoption at this place was finiſhed, he was taken by the family

family to Nundow, a town on the Geneſee River. The head of this family was a chief or king of the Senecas. But before Thomas was fully received into the family, there was a ſecond lamentation.

Their proviſions, notwithſtanding it was a ſeaſon of great plenty, was often deers guts, dried with the dung, and all boiled together, which they conſider ſtrong and wholeſome food. They never throw away any part of the game they take.

Thomas Peart's dreſs was entirely in the Indian ſtile, painted and ornamented like one of themſelves, though in a meaner manner, as they did not hold him high in eſteem after his adoption.

Greatly diſcontented, he often retired into the woods, and reflected upon his unhappy ſituation, without hopes of returning to his relations, or ever being reſcued from captivity.

He continued in this ſolitary ſecluſion about five weeks, when their corn was moſtly conſumed; and as their dependence for a freſh ſupply was on Niagara fort, they concluded to go thither, but at firſt would not conſent that Thomas ſhould accompany them; but he was ſo urgent, they at length conſented, and the next day they had an Indian dance, preparatory to their expedition.

In the route Thomas Peart got a deer, which was an acceptable acquiſition, as they

had been for ſome days without any meat, and their corn was likewiſe expended.

When they came within two miles of the fort, they halted, and ſtaid there until morning.

A white priſoner, who came from the fort, gave Thomas Peart a particular relation of his fellow captives: this was the firſt account he had of them ſince their ſeparation at the Indian towns. As ſoon as he came to the fort, he applied to ſome of the officers, requeſting their exertions to procure Thomas's liberty, if poſſible; but he was diſappointed, as nothing could be then done to ſerve him.

He eat ſome ſalt proviſions, which, as he had taſted but little ſalt ſince his captivity, (although pleaſing to his palate) affected his ſtomach, it being difficult for him to digeſt.

As he was to return with the Indians in about a week, it was very diſtreſſing, being much diſguſted with the fare he met amongſt them.

They returned by way of Fort Sluſher, and then along Lake Erie, up Buffalo Creek, taking ſome fiſh as they went. They paſſed by the place where Elizabeth Peart and Rebecca Gilbert were, but he had not an opportunity of ſeeing them.

The ſtores they took home with them, conſiſted of rum, ſalt, and ammunition.

Lake

Lake Erie is about three hundred miles long from eaſt to weſt, and about forty in breadth: it receives its ſupply of waters from Lakes Superior, Michigan, and Huron, by a North Weſt paſſage, called the Streights of Detroit. A very long narrow piece of land lies on its north ſide, which projects remarkably into the lake, and has been noticed by moſt travellers, and is known by the name of Long Point. There are ſeveral iſlands in it, which, with the banks of the lake, were more infeſted with different kinds of ſnakes, particularly the rattle-ſnake, than other places.

The navigation of this lake is allowed to be more dangerous than the others, on account of the high lands projecting into it; ſo that when ſudden ſtorms ariſe, boats are frequently loſt, as there are but few places to land, and ſeldom a poſſibility of finding a ſhelter near the craggy precipices.

The waters of Erie paſs through a north-eaſt communication into the river Niagara, which, by a northerly courſe of near thirty-ſix miles, falls into Lake Ontario.

At the diſcharge of this river into Lake Ontario, on the eaſt ſide, ſtands Fort Niagara; and at the entrance from Lake Erie lies Erie Fort; between theſe two forts are thoſe extraordinary falls which claim the at-

tention of the curious, and are amongſt the moſt remarkable works of nature.

This ſtupendous cataract is ſupplied with the waters of the ſeveral lakes, and their diſtant ſprings; which, after traverſing many hundred miles, ruſh aſtoniſhingly down a moſt horrid precipice, and which, by a ſmall iſland, is ſeparated into two large columns, and each near one hundred and forty feet perpendicular, and in a ſtrong, rapid, inconceivable foam and roar, extends near nine miles further, having in this diſtance a deſcent nearly equal to the firſt.

The ſtreight of Niagara is eſteemed dangerous for a mile or upwards above the falls. The water of the falls raiſes a very heavy miſt, ſomewhat reſembling a continuation of the river; and this deception, together with the rapidity of the current, frequently hurries the ducks and geeſe down this dreadful precipice.

This vaſt body of water, after paſſing through the Streight of Niagara, is received by Lake Ontario, or Cataraqui, which is nearly of an oval form. Its greateſt length is from north-eaſt to ſouth-weſt, and is generally allowed to be ſix hundred miles in circumference. And although the leaſt of the five great lakes of Canada is much the ſafeſt for ſhipping, as the channel is leſs obſtructed by rocks or iſlands, than the

the other lakes. The ſouth ſide is the moſt commodious for batteaux and canoes, having a moderately ſhelving bank and ſhore on that ſide: the other is more rocky.

Many of the rivers which fall into it are barred in their entrances by broken hills, but the vallies are uncommonly fertile.

On the ſouth the moſt conſiderable rivers which fall into this lake, are, the great and little Seneca. The falls of theſe rivers render them not navigable near the lake; but after the carrying-places are paſſed, they run ſlow and deep.

In order to keep up the communication between the different parts of Canada, there is a portage from the landing below Niagara Falls, to the landing above, up three ſharp hills, along which, the road for about eight or nine miles has been made as eaſy for carts as it poſſibly could; (thence to Lake Erie is about eighteen miles) but the ſtream is ſo ſwift here, that it is almoſt impoſſible to ſtem it for a mile or two in a ſhip with the ſtiffeſt gale; though batteaux and canoes paſs along without much danger, as the current is leſs rapid near the ſhore. On the north-eaſt it empties itſelf into the river Cataraqui.

From this ſhort digreſſive account of the lakes, we may return to the ſituation of the priſoner, and the Indian family.

When they had consumed their last year's stock of corn, they lived very low, and were reduced to great necessity, digging what wild esculent roots they could find; this was so different from what he had been accustomed to, that he could not bear it with that cheerfulness with which the Indians met such difficulties. His painful reflections, and the want of necessaries, reduced him exceeding low.

Whilst in this distress, he happily obtained the use of a testament from a white woman, who had been taken captive, and afterwards married amongst them. With this solacing companion, he frequently retired into the woods, and employed himself in reading and meditating upon the instruction couched in it.

The Indians directed a white girl to inform him, that they intended a hunt of twenty days, and were desirous he should attend them; to this he agreed, and the whole family accompanied the hunters. They passed by the town where Joseph Gilbert was, who informed his brother that he was going to Niagara: Thomas Peart replied he had already been there, and then informed him how the others of their relations were dispersed.

On their way up the Genesee River, where they intended to hunt, they took a deer.

The

The fourth day, as Thomas Peart was beating for game, he loſt his company; but at length came to ſome Indians, who directed him. When he came to the family much fatigued, and told them he had been loſt, they were much delighted at the perplexing ſituation he had been in.

The next day they moved further, hunting as they went, and in the evening fixed their quarters, where they ſtaid two nights.

Thomas Peart not endeavouring to pleaſe them, they took umbrage at his neglect. This, added to a fit of the ague, induced them to leave him in the woods, he being ſo weak he could not keep up with them, and was obliged to follow by their tracks in the leaves.

Their proviſions ſoon began to waſte, and it was not long before it was entirely conſumed; and as they took no game, they were under the neceſſity of eating wild cherries.

The proſpect appeared very gloomy to our captive, to be thus diſtreſſed with hunger, and to be from home near one hundred miles with the whole family: but this ſituation, though ſo alarming to him, did not appear to reach their ſtoic inſenſibility. In this extremity one of the Indians killed a fine elk, which was a long wiſhed-for and delightful ſupply; but as the weather was very warm,

and they had no ſalt, it ſoon became putrid, and filled with maggots, which they, notwithſtanding, eat without reſerve.

After they had been out upwards of thirty days, the Indians changed their courſe towards their own habitation, making but little progreſs forwards, as they kept hunting as they went. And as Thomas had long been uneaſy, and deſirous to return, not expecting to have been abſent more than twenty days, they gave him ſome directions, and a ſmall ſhare of proviſions; he then left them, after an unſucceſsful hunt of forty days: and, although weak and unfit for the journey, he ſet off in the morning, and kept as near a north-weſt courſe as he could, going as faſt as his ſtrength would permit over large creeks, ſwamps, and rugged hills; and when night came on, made up a ſmall fire, and being exceedingly fatigued, laid himſelf down on the ground, and ſlept very ſoundly. In the morning he continued his journey.

When he conſidered the great diſtance through the woods to the Indian towns, and the difficulty of procuring game to ſubſiſt on, it dejected him greatly. His ſpirits were ſo depreſſed, that when his fire was extinguiſhed in the night, he even heard the wild beaſts walking and howling around him, without regarding them, as with all his

his exertions and aſſiduity, he had but ſmall hope of ever reaching the towns, but providentially he ſucceeded.

On the journey he eat a land tortoiſe, ſome roots and wild cherries.

When he reached the town, the Indians were pleaſed with his return, and inquired the reaſon of his coming alone, and where he had left the family he went with; which he fully informed them of.

This being the time for feaſting on their new crop of corn, and they having plenty of pumpkins and ſquaſhes, gave an agreeable proſpect of a ſhort ſeaſon of health, and frequent, though ſimple, feaſts.

About ten days after this, the family returned; they ſoon inquired if Thomas Peart had reached home, and upon being informed that he had, replied that it was not expected he ever could.

The Indians concluding to make a war excurſion, aſked Thomas to be with them; but he determinately refuſed them, and was therefore left at home with the family; and not long after had permiſſion to viſit his brother Benjamin Peart, who was then about fifteen or eighteen miles diſtant, down the Geneſee river.

Benjamin Peart was at that time very much indiſpoſed: Thomas, therefore, ſtaid with him ſeveral days, and, when he reco-

vered a little ſtrength, left him, and returned to his old habitation.

He was thoroughly acquainted with the cuſtoms, manners, and diſpoſitions of the Indians, and obſerving that they treated him juſt as they had done the old worthleſs Indian, in whoſe place he was adopted, (he having been conſidered a perquiſite of the Squaws;) he therefore concluded he would only fill his predeceſſor's ſtation, and uſed no endeavours to pleaſe them, as his buſineſs was to cut wood for the family; notwithſtanding he might eaſily have procured a ſufficient ſtore, yet he was not ſo diſpoſed, but often refuſed, and even left it for the Squaws ſometimes to do themſelves, not doubting, if he was diligent and careful, they would be leſs willing to give him his liberty.

Joſeph Gilbert came to ſee him, and, as has been mentioned, informed him of the deceaſe of their father.

Some time in the fall, the king (whoſe brother Thomas was called) died, and he was directed to hew boards, and make a coffin for him; when it was completed, they ſmeared it with red paint. The women, whoſe attention to this is always inſiſted on amongſt the Indians, kept the corpſe for ſeveral days, when they prepared a grave, and interred him; it being conſidered amongſt this tribe diſgraceful for a man to take any notice of this

this ſolemn and intereſting ſcene. A number of Squaws collected upon this occaſion, and there was great mourning, which they continued for ſeveral days at ſtated times. As the place of interment, as well as that appointed for weeping, was near the hut Thomas Peart reſided at, he had an opportunity of indulging his curioſity, through the openings of the logs, without giving offence.

Soon after this, one of the women, who was called Thomas's ſiſter, deſired him to accompany her about fifty miles towards Niagara. Some others of the family went with them, and in their way they took a deer and other game.

They were from home on this journey about ſix days; during the time, there fell a very heavy ſnow, which made their journey toilſome. The women were ſent homeward before the reſt, to prepare ſomething againſt they came.

When they had loitered at home a few days, they ſet about gathering their winter ſtore of hickory nuts: from ſome of them they extracted an oil, which they eat with bread or meat, at their pleaſure.

Frequently before they ſet off on their hunting parties, they make an Indian frolick; when, commonly, all the company become extravagantly intoxicated: and when they in-

tend to go off this winter, they firſt give the preparatory entertainment.

After they were gone, Thomas Peart and the miſtreſs of the family diſagreeing, ſhe inſiſted upon his joining to the hunters, and living on the game, that ſhe might ſave more corn. He pleaded the coldneſs of the ſeaſon, and his want of clothing, but it would not avail; he was therefore turned out, and upon finding the hunters, he built them huts, where they ſtaid for ſome weeks, taking the game, and eating wild meat without corn, as the ſupply they had raiſed was ſhort.

When they were weary with their employ, they moved to their old hut, and lived in their idle manner for a long time. They then again returned to their hut, and ſtaid about ten days, and took ſeveral deer.

A few days after their return from hunting, they acquainted Thomas that they ſhould ſet off for Niagara; which was truly grateful to him. There were fifteen of them on this viſit. The old woman gave Thomas Peart a ſtrict charge to return.

Although the proſpect of ſeeing or hearing from his relations was delightful, yet the journey was exceſſively painful; the ſnow covering the ground to a conſiderable depth, the cold increaſed, and they had to wade through ſeveral deep creeks, the water often freezing to their legs; and Thomas Peart, as well

well as the reſt, were unclothed, excepting a blanket and pair of leggings.

In five days they came to Fort Sluſher, and at the treats they there received, were moſt of them drunk for the day.

Next morning they went to Niagara, where he immediately made application to the Britiſh officers to ſolicit his releaſe. Captain Powel informed Colonel Johnſon, who requeſted it of the Indians; they required ſome time to deliberate upon the ſubject, not willing to diſoblige the Colonel, and at length concluded to comply with his requeſt; telling him, that however hard it might be to part with their own fleſh, yet, to pleaſe him, they conſented to it, hoping he would make them ſome preſent.

Colonel Johnſon then directed him to his own houſe, and deſired him to clean himſelf, and ſent clothes for him to dreſs with. Here he had plenty of ſalt proviſions, and every neceſſary of life: this, with the happy regaining of his liberty, gave a new ſpring to his ſpirits, and, for a few days, he ſcarcely knew how to enjoy ſufficiently this almoſt unlooked-for change.

When recruited, he went to work for Colonel Johnſon, and a few weeks after had the ſatisfaction of his brother Benjamin Peart's company; who, though not releaſed, yet was permitted to ſtay at the fort, and worked with his

his brother until ſpring; when Capt. Powel, Lieutenant Johnſon, and Thomas Peart went up Buffalo Creek, with two boats loaded with proviſions, and a proportion of planting corn, together with hoes, to be diſtributed among the Indians.

In this expedition Thomas had the ſatiſfaction of ſeeing and converſing with his ſiſter Rebecca, which was the firſt of their meeting together, after a ſeparation of a year.

At the diſtribution of the corn and hoes, the Indians met, and made a general feaſt; after which they diſperſed; and the officers, when they had completed their buſineſs, returned to Niagara, after an abſence of eight or nine days.

Thomas Peart was ſettled at Col. Johnſon's to work for him at two ſhillings and ſixpence per day, till the eighth month, when ſix of the captives were ſent to Montreal, and Thomas alſo had permiſſion to go, but he choſe rather to ſtay, to afford his aſſiſtance to his ſiſter Rebecca Gilbert, and his couſin Benjamin Gilbert, junior, who yet remained in captivity; exerting himſelf as ſtrenuouſly as poſſible on their behalf.

In the fall, he went up again to Buffalo Creek, where he ſaw his ſiſter and couſin a ſecond time, and aſſured his ſiſter that the Colonel intended to inſiſt on her being releaſed; this encouraged her to hope.

The

The Indians are too indolent to employ ſufficient pains to preſerve their grain in the winter; therefore, thoſe who plant near the fort, generally ſend the greater part to the Engliſh to preſerve for them, and take it back as they want it: therefore, what this neighbourhood had more than for a ſhort ſupply, they carried with them in their boats to the fort.

In the winter, Thomas Peart undertook to chop wood for the Britiſh officers, and built himſelf a hut about two miles from the fort, in which he lodged at night. A drunken Indian came to his cabin one evening with a knife in his hand, with an intention of miſchief; but, being debilitated with liquor, Thomas Peart eaſily wreſted his knife from him.

A wolf came one night up to the door of his cabin, which he diſcovered next morning, by the tracks in the ſnow; and a few nights after paid a ſecond viſit, when he fired at him, and, by the blood on the ſnow, ſuppoſed he had mortally wounded him.

Next ſpring, Thomas went with the officers again up Buffalo Creek, when he afreſh animated his ſiſter, by informing her that General Haldimand had given orders to the officers to procure their liberty.

As they returned by Fort Erie, their boats were in danger from the ice in the lake and river.

river. It continues in these parts until late in the spring; sometimes as late as the fifth month; and, as soon as melted, the vegetation is astonishingly quick.

About two weeks after they returned, Thomas Peart went back again with some officers, who were going to the Indians.

After a tour of fifteen days, he came again to the fort, where he staid for several weeks, and received several letters from his relations at Montreal, by some officers who were on their way to Cataraguors, on Lake Erie, about eighty miles from Niagara; who, in their way, saw Rebecca and Benjamin Gilbert, jun. with a number of Indians, going for Niagara. Tho. Peart made as quick dispatch as possible to meet them, delighted with the prospect of their obtaining their liberty.

They took a porcupine, which is somewhat larger than a rackoon, and covered remarkably with quills of bone, about eight or nine inches long, which they can discharge with such force, as to penetrate through a man's hand at a considerable distance.

A few days after he returned from this expedition, the captives were delivered up: these two had been with the Indians upwards of two years.

In a short time after their release, Thomas Peart procured permission for them and himself to proceed to Montreal, and was furnish-

ed

ed with a paſs, containing an order to obtain what proviſions they might be in want of in their paſſage.

The ſecond day of the 6th month, 1782, they went on board the ſhip Limner, and proceeded towards Montreal. When they came againſt the place where their father was interred, thoſe whom they were with gave Thomas and Rebecca notice, though they did not land, but purſued their voyage; and, after being ſeven days on the water, they reached Fort Laſheen, where they ſtaid that night, and the next day went to Montreal to their relations: ſoon after which, a letter was received from the before-mentioned Benj. Gilbert, then at Caſtleton, acquainting them of his being ſo far on his way to Montreal, in order to give them aſſiſtance in getting home, and requeſting that permiſſion might be obtained for his coming in; which Elizabeth immediately applied to the officers for: who with great cheerfulneſs wrote in her behalf to Gen. Haldimand, at Quebec, who readily granted her requeſt, together with other favours to Elizabeth, worthy of her grateful remembrance; by which means Benjamin's arrival at Montreal was ſoon effected, where he had the pleaſure once more of ſeeing and converſing with his relations and neareſt connexions, to their great joy and ſatisfaction, after an abſence of near three years; during

during which time, they had but little if any certain account of each other.

After ſome time ſpent in inquiring after their relatives and friends, and converſing on the once unthought of and ſtrange ſcenes of life they had paſſed through ſince their ſeparation, it became neceſſary to prepare for their journey homewards, which was accordingly done; and in about five weeks from the time of Benjamin's arrival, they took leave of the friends and acquaintances they had made during their reſidence there, whoſe hoſpitable and kind treatment merits their grateful and ſincere acknowledgments, and moſt ardent deſires for their welfare in every ſcene. And on the 22d day of the 8th month, 1782, attended by a great number of the inhabitants, they embarked in boats prepared for them, and took their departure. Having croſſed the river, and carriages being provided, they proceeded on their journey without much delay, until they came to St. John's, where they went on board a ſloop; but the winds being unfavourable, rendered their paſſage in the lake ſomewhat tedious.

They did not arrive at Crown-Point until about two weeks after their departure from Montreal. They continued here ſeveral days, and from thence went in open boats to Eaſt-Bay in about two days, where they landed and ſtaid all night, and were next day delivered up

up to the officers of Vermont. Here ſome of the company ſtaid two nights, on account of Benjamin Peart's child being very ill; by which time it ſo recovered, that they proceeded on to Caſtleton, where thoſe that went before had halted, and near that place ſtaid all night, and in the morning Elizabeth, the mother, having engaged to do an errand for a friend, was under a neceſſity of riding about thirty-five miles, which occaſioned her to be abſent two nights from the family, who were at Captain Willard's; at which place Benjamin provided horſes and waggons for the remainder of the journey, together with ſome proviſions. Here they were very civilly treated, and generouſly entertained, free of expence.

The family then proceeded on, and met their mother at the houſe of Captain Lanſon, where they ſtaid that night and until noon next day, and were alſo kindly treated by him.

Continuing their journey, they met with John Bracanage (who, together with Captain Lanſon, were paſſengers with them to Eaſt-Bay); he gave them an invitation to his houſe, which they accepted, and arrived there about noon next day, and continued with him two nights, and were reſpectfully entertained.

Having prepared for proſecuting their journey, they proceeded on for the North-River, where they met with Lot Trip and William

William Knowles, who kindly conducted the women to the houſe of David Sands, where they lodged that night. The reſt of the family came to them in the morning, and ſeveral of them attended friends meeting, not having had the like opportunity for ſeveral years before.

In the afternoon they purſued their journey, the before-mentioned Lot Trip and William Knowles accompanying them, and being in a waggon, kindly took Elizabeth and her younger daughter paſſengers with them, which proved a conſiderable relief.

In a few days they came into Pennſylvania, where they met with ſome of their relations, and former acquaintances and friends, who were unitedly rejoiced at the happy event of once more ſeeing and converſing with them.

The next day, being the twenty-eighth day of the ninth month, 1782, they arrived at Byberry, the place of their nativity, and the reſidence of their neareſt connexions and friends, where Elizabeth and her children were once more favoured with the agreeable opportunity of ſeeing and converſing with her ancient mother, together with their other neareſt relatives and friends, to their mutual joy and ſatisfaction; under which happy circumſtance we now leave them.

THOUGHTS

THOUGHTS

Alluding to, and in Part occaſioned by, the CAPTIVITY and SUFFERINGS of BENJAMIN GILBERT and his FAMILY.

AS from the foreſt iſſues the fell boar,
So human ravagers, in deſerts bred,
On the defenceleſs, peaceful hamlet pour
Wild waſte o'er all, and ſudden ruin ſpread!

Here, undiſguis'd, war's brutal ſpirit ſee,
Its venom'd nature to the root laid bare,
In which (trick'd up in webs of policy)
Profeſſing Chriſtians vindicate their ſhare.

Pompous profeſſion, vaunting in a name,
Floats lightly on an oſtentatious ſhow,
Nor dips ſincere, in reſignation's ſtream,
To bring memorials from the depths below.

Sophiſticated dogmas of the ſchools,
The flatulent, unwholeſome food of ſtrife,
With zeal pedantic for tradition's rules,
Still crucify the principle of life.

The

The woes of this probationary ſtate,
Through life ſo mingled and diverſified,
Derive their chief malignity and weight
From murm'ring diſcontent and captious pride.

Tranſient is human life, all fleſh as graſs,
The goodlineſs of man but as a flow'r.
Fine gold muſt through the fervid furnace paſs;
Through death we immortality explore.

Through judgment muſt deliverance be known,
From vile affections, and their wrathful ſting;
True peace pertains to righteouſneſs alone,
That flows, through faith, from life's eternal ſpring!

Should man (to glory call'd, and endleſs bliſs)
Bewail his momentary adverſe doom!
Or in deep thankful reſignation kiſs
The rod that prompts him on his journey home?

Unſearchable the providence of God,
By boaſted wiſdom of the ſon of duſt;
Lo! virtue feels oppreſſion's iron rod,
And impious ſpirits triumph o'er the juſt.

Shall hence a ſelf-conceited reptile dare
Th' omniſcient Ruler's equity arraign?
Say here thy wrath is fit, thy bounty there,
Good to promote, and evil to reſtrain.

Believing ſouls unfeignedly can ſay,
Not mine, by thy all-perfect will be done;
If beſt this bitter cup ſhould paſs away,
Or be endur'd, to thee, not me, is known.

Deep tribulation in the humbly wiſe,
Through patience to divine experience leads;
The ground where hope ſecurely edifies,
Purg'd of the filth whence conſcious ſhame proceeds.

Affliction is Bethesda's cleanſing pool,
Deep ſearching each diſtemper of the mind;
The poor way-farer, though eſteem'd a fool,
Baptizing here, immortal health may find.

Though for the preſent grim adverſity
Not joyous is, but grievous to ſuſtain;
Humbling the ſhepherd's call—"Come learn of me"
In lowly meekneſs to endure thy pain.

Yet ſhall it work a glorious recompence;
Nor can the heart of man conceive in full,
The good by infinite Benificence,
Stor'd for the patient unrepining ſoul.

Some feeble ones ſuſtain the galling yoke,
With firmneſs, no ferocious tempers know;
Calm reſignation mitigates the ſtroke
Of ills, tremendous to the diſtant view!

If diſappointment blaſt thy ſanguine hope,
Indulg'd in ſublunary proſpects fair,
Conclude thy guardian angel made the ſtop,
To check thy blind, thy dangerous career.

The captive family in ſavage bonds,
Trace through each rugged way and trackleſs wild:
Through famine, toils unknown, and hoſtile wounds,
The tender mother with her infant child.

Then

Then with thy lighter griefs their ſorrows weigh,
Nor let thy own demerits be forgot:
Impartial inference deduce, and ſay
Whence thy exemption from their heavy lot:

Is it thy wiſdom ſhields thee in the hour,
When mighty dangers o'er thy head impend?
Can thine, or other mortal arm of power,
From famine, peſtilence, or ſtorm defend?

Confeſs 'tis mercy covers thee from harm,
A care benign, unmerited by thee;
And if the grateful ſenſe thy boſom warm,
Small price is paid for ſuch felicity.

If the hard Indian's wild ferocity,
Againſt their race thy indignation move,
Think on the example due to them from thee,
Profeſſing Chriſtian equity and love.

So ſhall their cruel, their abhorred deeds,
Inſtruction to the humble mind convey;
Remind us whence all violence proceeds,
And ſtrengthen to purſue the peaceful way.

Vengeance with vengeance holds perpetual war:
Love only can o'er enmity prevail;
Sulphur and pitch, abſurdly who prepare,
To quench devouring fire, are ſure to fail.

Hear ye vindictive! be no longer proud,
The high decree is paſt, gone forth the word;
No vain illuſion———'tis the voice of God!
"Who uſe the ſword muſt periſh by the ſword."

Periſh

Periſh from that divine ennobling ſenſe
Of heavenly good, which evil overcomes;
That light, whoſe energetic influence,
With piercing ray diſpels bewild'ring glooms.

From whence come mortal jarrings! come they not
From luſt, from pride, from ſelfiſh arrogance?
In which, from peace and freedom far remote,
The blind goad on the blind, a ſlaviſh dance.

What! cries the zealot, ſhall not Chriſtian faith
O'er heathen infidelity prevail?
—Yes——but the means is not thy will, thy wrath;
Means which confederate with death and hell.

Did ever tyger-hearted Spaniſh chief,
By thoſe dire maſſacres in ſtory told,
Vanquiſh Peruvia's ſtubborn unbelief,
Or add one convert to the Chriſtian fold?

Vindictive man will ſtill retaliate,
Evil for evil, and ſtill rack his brains,
For arguments the cauſe to vindicate;
Nor knows what ſpirit in his boſom reigns.

Meſſiah is the love of God to man!
Reveal'd on earth, not to deſtroy, but ſave;
By wiſdom's peaceful influence to maintain,
Dominion over death, hell, and the grave.

But why for Chriſtian purity contend?
Who hath, alas! believ'd the glad report?
How many boaſt the name, the name defend;
Yet make the virtual life their ſcoff and ſport?

Deal forth their cenſures with unſparing zeal,
'Gainſt ſavage violence and cruel wrong;
Nor dream the real eſſental infidel
Holds o'er their ſpirits his dominion ſtrong.

What Turkiſh rover, or what heathen foe,
Shews more contempt of goſpel equity,
Than thoſe, to ſultry climes remote who go,
T' enſlave their fellow men, by nature free?

The yelling warrior, with relentleſs hand,
Leaves parent childleſs, fatherleſs the ſon;
Their griefs our tender ſympathy demand;
But what have diſtant Afric's children done?

Will ſtill the pick-thank, temporizing prieſt,
Give this oppreſſion Phariſaic aid?
Will civiliz'd believers ſtill perſiſt
To vindicate the abominable trade?

Th' extenſive, deep, unrighteous t' unfold,
Weſt-India's dark, inhuman laws explore;
What groſs iniquity we there behold,
In ſolemn acts of legiſlative pow'r?

Britons, who loud for liberty contend,
Affect to guard their nation from the ſtain;
Yet ſordidly in Mammon's temple bend,
And largely ſhare in the ungodly gain.

What ardent execrations do we hear,
'Gainſt barb'rous Mohoc's, bloody Shawaneſe?
From father's arms their hopeful ſons who tear;
From mother's breaſts love's tender pledges ſeize.

O Chriſtian!

O Chriſtian! think with what redoubled force,
'Gainſt which fallacious artifice is vain,
On thee recurs thy aggravated curſe,
Heav'n's righteous Judge pronouncing, "Thou
art the man."

Think for what end the Mediator came,
On earth an ignominious death to die;
Thy ſoul from wrath's dominion to redeem,
And to himſelf a people purify.

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